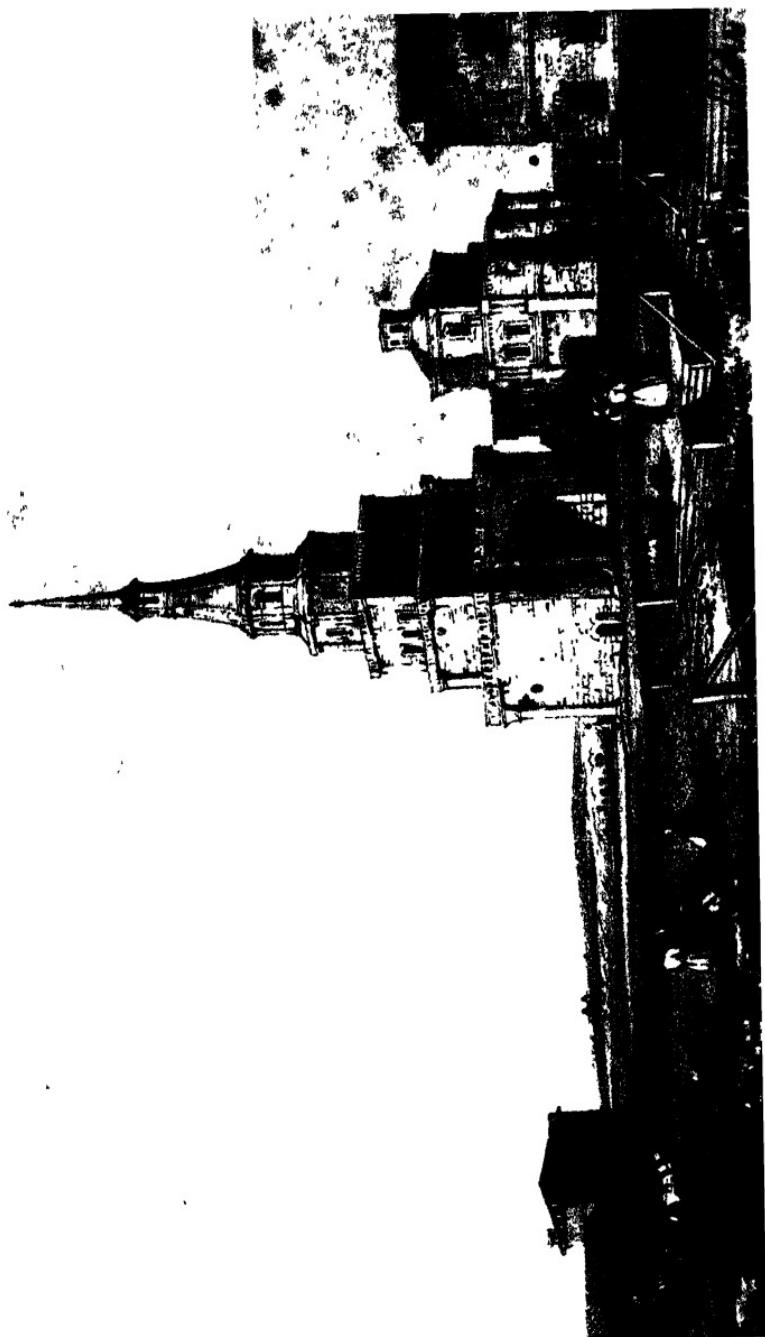








K A Z A N.







# RUSSIA ON THE BORDERS OF ASIA.

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## K A Z A N,

THE

Ancient Capital of the Tartar Khans;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

THE PROVINCE TO WHICH IT BELONGS, THE TRIBES  
AND RACES WHICH FORM ITS POPULATION, ETC.

BY

EDWARD TRACY TURNERELLI.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# SKETCHES OF KAZAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE TARTAR TOWN AND ITS INHABITANTS.

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### I.

IF, Reader, you should ever chance to stand, as I have done, in the centre of the bridge called “the Tartar Bridge of Kazan,” you will see one of the most singular views you have ever beheld, however far you may have travelled, and whatever be the lands you may have visited.

If you turn your back upon the lake, you see extended before you, united in one vast and im-

posing panorama, all the north-west portion of the town, with its most remarkable edifices,—the Gostinoi Dvor, the cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, a part of the fortress, with the lofty steeples and gilt cupolas of its churches, the Assembly-rooms of the nobility, the University and its observatory, and many other curious and interesting buildings. Elegant carriages of modern form and construction, groups of pedestrians, among whom may be remarked officers in their uniforms, ladies in the Parisian costume of the day, Russian merchants in their flowing kaftans, and peasants of the same nation, give life to this interesting panorama: the spectator is in Europe, and is contemplating an almost general view of the Russian portion of the town of Kazan.

Let him now turn in an opposite direction. Whither is he transported? Whence this sudden metamorphosis? How can so extraordinary a change have been so instantaneously effected? Instead of Christian churches with their cupolas and gilded crosses, Mahometan mosques surmounted by the crescent rivet his attention; wooden houses, fantastically painted and of an endless variety of forms and colours, have replaced the European edifices of brick and stone which he so lately contemplated. Tartar women covered with thick veils, and clad in robes loaded with gold and silver lace and various massive ornaments, offer a striking contrast to the

plain and refined toilets of the European females which he gazed on a minute before. Instead of Russian merchants, he perceives Tartar Mollahs, with their heads enveloped in enormous turbans of white muslin, and whose forms are lost in the ample folds of their variegated khalats of Bucharian or Persian texture ; instead of Russian serfs, Tartar peasants meet his gaze: as if by the wand of an enchanter, the observer has been instantaneously transported from Europe to Asia. He is contemplating a view of that Asiatic portion of the town of Kazan, entitled "the Tartar Suburbs," inhabited exclusively by the descendants of that once mighty race, now fallen, which formerly bore an undisputed sway in these regions, but whose power has passed away, even like a dream, never to return.

The lake we have alluded to, called Kaban, which gives such beauty to this scene, is in itself a spot of great interest. On its southern bank rises the Russian Town, and on the opposite bank the Tartar Suburbs ; it forms therefore a natural barrier between the two races, and serves as a protection to their respective religious forms of worship. It prevents the ear of the Christian portion of the population being offended by the cry of the Muezzin, "God is God, and Mahomet is his prophet," by which he calls the Tartars to prayer ; and to the latter it is equally useful, for it intercepts the sound of the Christian bells and the chant of the Chris-

tian priests, which to them form so disagreeable a music. In a word, both Christians and Mahometans are bound to view it with equal consideration ; for its waters, bad as they are, serve as a means of existence to the entire population of Kazan.

## II.

Kaban is a Tartar word, قَبَان, and signifies *wild boar*,—a name which was given to this lake, in consequence of these animals having formerly been found in great numbers in the marshes and forests around the Kazanka, and on the banks of the lake itself. There are two other lakes in the neighbourhood of the town which bear the same appellation ; the three are joined together by a narrow canal, and the last and most distant of these lakes is almost surrounded by mountains. On the banks of the second lake, situated about five miles from the town, is built the palace of the Archbishop of Kazan, which stands upon elevated ground ; beneath, at the base of the hill, is situated a little village, called Boutirka. This village is a favourite place of summer-resort for the inhabitants of Kazan who have no country-houses of their own ; they hire for the season the cottages of the peasants, which, comfortless as they are, still are valuable, as they save many a citizen of Kazan from a residence in town during the excessive heat, and offer them a refuge against the dust which rises perpetually in the

streets, and during the summer almost suffocates and blinds the pedestrian.

The village of Boutirka is principally inhabited by peasants attached to the archbishopric ; the labour they have to perform is light, and they appear to lead a tranquil and happy life. It is from among them that the Archbishop chooses his servants and the working-men he requires. After a few years' service they are allowed to retire, and return to their homes, to pass their old-age in the midst of their families and relations.

There is no spot in the vicinity of Kazan more picturesque, or more suited for a summer sojourn, than this ; for it can boast of mountains and valleys well adapted for parties of pleasure, besides shady woods to walk in, and a fine wide lake to bathe in and to sail or row on. Nature moreover has particularly favoured this portion of Kazan, and rendered it well adapted for the purpose for which it is employed.

During the summer season this place sometimes presents scenes which are well worthy of notice. On the bank opposite to that on which the village of Boutirka is built, may be seen groups of Tartars, squatted in the oriental posture, upon carpets and cushions, smoking their long pipes, and taking tea in solemn silence ; different Tartar comestibles are spread before them. The women may be seen standing a little in the rear, in token of respect to their lords and masters. Their heads are covered

with a thick veil, and they assist at the repast without being allowed to partake of it,—at least not until the male portion of the society have finished theirs. On the lake you may see boats moving to and fro ; from some of these proceed the sounds of military music, which glides so agreeably on the ear over the surface of the waters. The boats are filled with ladies and officers, who come hither to enjoy the pleasures of boating, so delightful at the hour of twilight, when accompanied with the sounds of music. On the opposite bank of the lake may be seen the Russian townsmen of Kazan busily engaged, like the Tartars, in drinking tea, and seated like the latter in groups on the grass ; their wives and daughters, more respected than those of their Mahometan neighbours, are not excluded from their society. The scene I have drawn is one which often strikes the attention of him who strolls to this spot during a fine summer's afternoon.

Should he be disposed to extend his walk a little further, and to enter the garden of the Archbishop's residence, he will find likewise therein parties of ladies and gentlemen enjoying an evening's ramble in its alleys and bowers. Some are seated on the benches doing honour to the provisions and refreshments they brought with them. If the stroller should be disposed to enter the pretty church of the Archbishop's palace, he will be sure to find in

it some devout Russians, engaged in offering up a short prayer before they leave this place. And near the entrance of the palace he will behold Tartars prostrate on a large monumental stone, which covers the tomb of one of their princes, whose ashes repose in this spot, which is the object of constant pilgrimages. If we add to the scene we have depicted the different beds of flowers which adorn the garden, the lofty trees which grow in every direction, and the vast sheet of water which gives such a charm to the landscape, the reader, if he be gifted in the smallest degree with imagination, will doubtless be able to form from the *ensemble* a very pleasing and interesting picture.

### III.

Such is the aspect which the Kaban wears during the summer months. And now will the reader be so good-natured as to take a short ramble with me along the banks of this lake, although it be but in imagination? In his pleasing society, I will suppose that we have strolled together into the centre of the Tartar Town. We now stand arm-in-arm (if he will condescend to be so friendly) in one of its principal streets. There are so many things to look at, so many new scenes to contemplate, that I am not at all astonished at his bewildered mien and solemn silence. But do look, most intelligent companion, at

that vast mosque, whose lofty minaret, rising from the roof of the edifice, terminates in a point surmounted by the crescent: that is the principal mosque of Kazan. In what a singular manner are not its doors, windows, niches, etc., carved and sculptured! What an extraordinary-looking staircase leads to the chief entrance! But see, as good luck would have it, there is the Muezzin climbing to the summit of the minaret. Do you not hear that sharp, loud cry with which he rends the air?—“*La'ilahi Illilahuva Mahomed rasulillahi!*” (God is God, and Mahomet is his prophet.) At this call the Tartars, rich and poor, are hurrying to the mosque in crowds. They ascend the staircase, leaving their slippers at the door previous to entering the temple.

Let us enter with them, for be sure, gentle reader, if you have never been in a Tartar mosque, it will be worth the trouble to accompany me. But take care to leave your galoshes at the door, otherwise we stand a fair risk of being bundled out without much ceremony; and well we should deserve it, for really I was always of opinion that those travellers who will not conform to the customs and usages of the countries they visit deserve to receive a good lesson in some shape or other. And now we stand in the Mussulman temple. Light penetrates into the interior through several small and narrow windows. Opposite the door is a

niche, in which the Mollahs (Tartar priests) are seated: this niche is called *mikhab*. This portion of the building is always turned towards Mecca. The Koran lies before him on a table. Near the door is a *petch* (oven), which emits a suffocating heat. Above the door is a species of gallery, in which the singers are placed. Opposite to this, in a corner, raised some feet from the ground, is erected a wooden pulpit, of a Gothic form, prepared for the Mollah, before whom are placed the sacred books, the Koran, etc. etc. From the ceiling hangs a large chandelier, and between the windows are affixed small candelabra. On the walls are painted, in large Arabic letters, select verses from the Koran. The floor is almost entirely covered with a carpet. A variety of fragments of cloth are hung around; these are offerings brought by pilgrims from Mecca.

The mosque is entirely full. The Tartars are ranged in several files or lines, and in the most perfect order; they are sitting, or rather squatting, in the Oriental position, with covered heads. The Mollah, who on our entrance was seated in the niche we have described, with his face turned towards the congregation, now ascends the pulpit, holding a long cane in his hand. Before he commences the prayer, the *Assantchi* cries out with a loud voice, "Bend yourselves whenever the Mollah does so, for such is the law!" After this, the

Mollah begins the sacred chant, “Oh ! Allah !”—and what a chant it is ! What discordant and strange sounds proceed from that Mussulman’s mouth !—one might imagine that every word it uttered was composed of consonants alone. When the Mollah ceases, the choristers continue the chant, which they interrupt in order to allow the Mollah to sing again. Whilst this is going on, the Tartars are busy in bending their bodies backwards and forwards, stroking their beards, and prostrating themselves with their foreheads to the earth.

The Mollah then stands up ; his example is followed by the whole congregation. All are seen to raise their hands on high, pronouncing at the same time with a low voice the words “*Allakhy ekvare*,” or “God is great ;” then they let their hands fall again and place them on their stomachs. After that every man, on a sign from the Mollah, reads to himself the first chapter of the Koran. While they are reading, ever and anon they bend their heads down to their waists, exclaiming again with one voice “*Allakhy ekvare !*” In the position alluded to, they repeat thrice the words “Blessed is our God in the highest.” Again they raise their heads, uttering the words “Great is the Lord our God.” Resuming once more their prostrate position on the earth, they repeat thrice the words we have just mentioned. The singers upon this once more recommence their discordant melody, the Tartars

constantly bending and bowing until the chant is over ; after which they all rise up in so spontaneous a manner, and with such extraordinary precision, that I verily believe the best-disciplined soldiers could not execute their evolutions with greater accuracy. The gestures and movements of the Tartars at their prayers are very remarkable. Sometimes they place their fingers in their ears, as people do when they do not wish to hear an explosion ; they stroke their beards, as if they were brushing and polishing them ; ever and anon they place their fingers on their mouth, as is often done to recommend silence ; at other moments they turn their heads from right to left and from left to right, like automatons ; they bend, rise, kneel, and prostrate themselves on the earth. All this is done with wonderful rapidity : I can only compare the movements of the congregation, and the noise caused by the dress of the multitude thus occupied, to a field of corn, when the ears, agitated by the wind, bend and rise again with that peculiar rustling sound which is doubtless familiar to the reader.

When the service is entirely over, all the Tartars turn their heads and bow in every direction of the mosque, in order to announce to the angels that the prayers have been punctually said and the various ceremonies duly performed.

It is worthy of notice, that these different prayers, genuflexions, and movements are performed with

the most solemn gravity and calm. It must be acknowledged likewise, that the piety and fervour of the Tartars in their mosques cannot possibly be surpassed. They seem truly and thoroughly absorbed with one only thought—that of God and his goodness. We Christians (at least many of us) might indeed, in some respects, gain by following the example of the followers of Mahomet, as regards their behaviour during Divine service. It is true the Mussulmans have not to complain of one of the great causes of our inattention and remissness—they have no bright eyes in their mosques, whose light so often tends to make man forget the Creator to think of the creature, nor seducing glances which bring (to say the least) to his mind and heart thoughts and feelings unfitting for the moment.

I have often thought that it would be well if men and women could pray to God apart from each other—if both could have their own respective place of worship, the entrance to which should be strictly forbidden to the opposite sex : I am inclined to believe (though I may be wrong) that the fervour of our religious ceremonies would be increased thereby. This is an idea which theologians and divines may turn to their profit, if they think proper.

But, hush ! See, the Mollah is moving towards the pulpit, holding in his hand a long cane ; he is now ascending the steps of the staircase : on reaching the second or the third he sits himself down,

as if he was tired, but after a few seconds he rises again and mounts the pulpit ; then the Muezzin approaches him, and pronounces the same prayer which he uttered from the summit of the minaret to call the faithful to prayer. After this, the Mollah, leaning on his cane, in a dismal tone of voice, begins the *khoutba*, or sermon, which consists of very short sentences, and which he finishes by reading the first chapter of the Koran.

The reader would doubtless wish to know what a Tartar sermon consists of ; we give him the following, as a specimen :—

“ Glory be to God ! Glory be to God ! Glory be to God ! who adorned the sky with stars and planets, who created the earth, the waters, the springs, and the sea ; who made the night to follow the day, and day to follow the night ; who formed heaven, hell, and the angels who serve and praise Him. Glory be to our great God ! who promised to those who believe in Him, Paradise, filled with pure waters ; and to those who are wicked, Hell, with all its punishments.

“ And we, here present, bear witness, that there is no God but God, the only and all-powerful God.

“ We bear witness, that Mahomet, His slave and messenger, was His chosen. May God’s blessing descend upon him, his family, and followers !

“ May the blessing of God be specially on His Imam Aboubekir, the first and best of the friends and followers of Mahomet, the commander of the faithful, and who was faithfully attached to this Prophet of God in all his most difficult undertakings !

“ May the blessing of God be on the great Imam Omar Alfarouk, the good judge, and just chastiser of the infidel and the wicked !

“ May the blessing of God be upon the celebrated Imam Osman, a model of mildness, the commander of the faithful and holy, possessor of a bright mind, and a treasure of gentleness and virtue !

“ May the blessing of God be upon the celebrated Imam Ali, the wondrous warrior, the commander of the faithful, the perfect fulfiller of His sacred duties, the door of science and of its secrets !

“ May the blessing of God be upon the light of Ali’s eyes, Hassan and Hussein\*, the joy of his hearing, the comforter of his sorrows, the grandchildren of the Prophet, the object of the love of Mahomet’s daughters and the blessed inhabitants of Paradise !

“ May the blessing of God be upon their holy uncles, Hamza and Abbas ! they were sinless and pure in their bodies.

“ May the blessing of God be on the companions and allies of Mahomet, and on the entire throng of the followers of the Prophet who followed him in his flight !

“ May the blessing of God be upon all his true disciples !

“ And I salute them with eternal, fervent praise.”

After this, the Mollah addresses some words of advice and exhortation to the congregation, telling them likewise how they are to act in the killing of the sacrifice.

\* Hassan and Hussein were the children of Ali.

Such is the form of every sermon given on holidays and festivals.

We mentioned that the Mollah, while delivering the sermon, holds a long cane in his hand, while it is known that among the Mahometans in other countries the preacher pronounces his sermon holding a drawn sabre. The Tartars explain this in the following manner : they say, that in lands which were conquered with the sword a sabre is used in the pulpit, but in those gained without bloodshed a cane is employed in its stead.

It remains to be mentioned, that while the Tartars are assisting at divine service in the mosques, the Tartar women are saying the same prayers and performing the same ceremonies at home.

But look ! the Tartars are rising from the ground, and are leaving the mosque. Each man puts on again his slippers at the door, and returns home with the same marvellous gravity and silence with which he assisted at the service.

#### IV.

Let us follow them to their homes ; we will see what their houses are like, and how their inmates live in them ; but we warn the reader that he will have rather a dirty walk, for the Tartar Town is not paved, and consequently, in the spring and autumn, its streets are so wet and muddy as to be almost impracticable. We consider it our duty to inform

him likewise, that the descriptions we purpose to give him are not only the result of our own experience, but that, in many cases where our personal knowledge was wanting or doubtful, we consulted the works of more than one Russian writer who has spoken of this race, and in particular we are indebted to the learned Doctor Fouks, whose medical profession and sojourn of nearly fifty years in Kazan gave him greater facility of access to this people, and who not only put in our hands several detached articles he had from time to time published in the Kazan Journal (from which, by the bye, we have copiously drawn), but favoured us with much unpublished information, which we have introduced in our sketches. With this frank confession, we begin our task,—trusting, thanks to the valuable help of our learned friend, backed by our own personal experience, to be able to give our readers a more complete and interesting account of this race, such as it is at the present day, than any that has yet appeared, not only in England (where nothing, I believe, on the subject has appeared at all), but even in Russia, where whatever has been written consists of detached articles, principally published on various occasions in the Russian periodicals.

The greatest part of the Tartar houses are built of wood, two stories high; some however are of brick. The lower story of each house serves for a

barn, storehouse, etc., or is let for hire ; the upper floor is inhabited by the owner. A great many houses are built in the centre of the yard, which is generally surrounded by a wall or wooden railing.

The houses of the richer class of Tartars resemble very much those of the Russian nobles and merchants. The walls of the rooms are generally painted, representing views of rivers, mountains, trees, etc., but neither man, nor beast, nor bird, ever animates the landscape—this is strictly forbidden. The sofas, chairs, and tables, are placed around the room according to the European fashion ; the chairs are always covered with coloured chintz. Two large looking-glasses are placed between the windows ; this is an important article of furniture among the Tartars. The floors are covered with rich Persian carpets ; the corners of the rooms are filled with a bureau, or a chest of drawers, made of mahogany or nut-wood ; a great many objects in porcelain or china adorn the shelves and side-boards ; but no silver spoons are to be seen, for such objects are likewise forbidden. In one of the rooms is always placed a large brass basin—an indispensable object of Tartar furniture ; above it are suspended two handsomely embroidered towels ; and still higher on the wall hangs the white *tchalma*, or turban, of the owner of the house, which he puts on when he goes to the mosque. In a great many Tartar houses are to be seen large cages with

Egyptian doves, whose cooing, Dr. Fouks supposes, warns the Tartars not to leave their wives. From the ceiling hangs a glass chandelier. All the windows, particularly those which face the street, are filled with pots of lemon and fig trees, geraniums, balsam, and basil plants. On a table in one of the rooms is placed the Koran, printed in Kazan, and other religious books, beautifully written and printed. Clocks and watches adorn the walls of the apartments we have described. The females of the house seldom or never enter: they live in a separate part of the mansion, to which the male members of the family (the husband excepted) are forbidden to penetrate.

The houses of the lower class of Tartars are arranged in the following manner: on the left hand, on entering, is constructed the *petch*, or oven, which serves for warming the room and for culinary purposes; before it stands a large saucepan, or cauldron, for boiling the meat, etc. etc. In front of the oven likewise is placed two large brass jugs, one for the husband, the other for the wife; because, according to custom, they are not allowed to wash out of the same jug. Behind the *petch*, in a corner, stands a very large brass washing-basin, above which hang two towels, one for the face and hands and the other for the feet.

In another quarter of the room is a wide bench, affixed to the wall, on which lies a well-stuffed

feather-bed, with a curtain ; in those houses where there is no curtain, the feather-bed is rolled up in the morning and put aside. Opposite the door, on the right, is placed a table, covered with a showy cotton table-cloth, and on the table stands a small looking-glass ; on the left, in a corner, is a little covered table, with cups and saucers, a basin or two, and a tray. A few wooden chairs adorn the walls of the apartment ; and a *samovar*\* (Russian urn) is placed on a stool near the petch. Between the tables, next to the wall, are placed two trunks, covered with carpets, which serve as an ornament to the room. To the wall, opposite the door, is fixed a small looking-glass ; the floor is covered with a common kind of carpet. As in the houses of the richer Tartars, every window is filled with pots of balsams and basil plants. On the right side of the petch is suspended a curtain, behind which the women retire when male visitors enter the house. Beyond the first room is another small apartment, in which the furs, clothes, and different goods and chattels are kept ; in this room the owner of the house sleeps in the summer.

## V.

Now that we have spoken of Tartar habitations, we shall proceed to speak of their inmates. The

\* *Samovar*, literally *self-boiler*, is a species of tea-urn, peculiar to Russia, which is heated and kept boiling by means of charcoal.

number of their race, inhabiting the town of Kazan, is about seven thousand. They are in general well-formed and handsome; their eyes are black or grey; they have a keen, piercing look, a rather lengthened form of face, a long nose, lips somewhat thicker than those of Europeans, a black beard, carefully trimmed, the hair entirely shaven from the head, which is covered with a small cap, called a *tebeteika*; their ears are large, and standing out from the head; a long neck, very wide shoulders, and a broad chest,—such is the description Dr. Fouks gives of their form and physiognomy. They are moreover generally tall and erect; their gait is manly and imposing. The Doctor was always warm in his praise of this race. He says that whenever he entered a Tartar mosque he was always struck with the fine and noble features of their elders, and he asserts his belief that the ancient Italian artists might have chosen from among this race most admirable subjects for their sacred pictures.

He is not so favourable in his description of the Tartar women. He does not consider them good-looking; but then it must be remembered, he had an opportunity of seeing only the wives and daughters of the poorer classes. In general the Tartar women are middle-sized, rather stout; like the men, they stand erect, but walk badly and awkwardly,—a circumstance principally owing to the heavy dress

they wear, as will be seen hereafter. They soon grow old, so much so that a woman of twenty-seven has the look of one of forty: this is owing to the custom they have of painting their faces. Their complexion is rather yellow, and their faces are often covered with pimples and a rash, which proceeds partly from the habit of constantly lying on feather-beds, and partly from their heavy and over-warm clothing.

Dr. Fouks, in a few words, thus describes the character of this race. "They are," says he, "proud, ambitious, hospitable, fond of money, cleanly, tolerably civilized (taking all things into consideration), intelligent in commerce, inclined to boasting, friendly to each other, sober in every way, and very industrious."

What is particularly striking is the tenacity with which the Tartars have retained their national characteristics, customs, and manners, although nearly three centuries have elapsed since this race was subdued by the Russians.

Dr. Fouks is loud in his praise of their hospitality, which he says is carried to such a degree that if a Tartar invites an acquaintance to his house, the latter is sure to be for two days stretched on a sick bed from over-feasting. Tea is one of the principal objects of the feast, and it is really astonishing how much of this favourite beverage both the men and women of this race manage daily to pour into their

stomachs. To visit a Tartar and not to drink half-a-dozen cups of tea, is to wound the feelings of your host in the highest degree.

Dr. Fouks says, he has often had to feel the effects of this custom ; for many a time, he told me, after having been forced to swallow from twenty to twenty-five cups of tea (these are the Doctor's own words), he has returned home afflicted with a species of dropsy, and found himself obliged to have recourse to medicine on the following day to remedy the evil. He visited occasionally his Tartar neighbours (the Doctor had a country estate in a Tartar locality) in company with his wife and children, and it was on these occasions that their hospitality was exhibited to its fullest extent. Every inhabitant of the village, dressed in their holiday garb, awaited his coming ; the women, clad in their gayest attire, stood at the doors of their houses, while the male portion of the population went in crowds to meet him a quarter of a mile from the hamlet. On his arrival, then began his visits from house to house, and with these, as he calls it, "his tea ordeal." All the cottages where he was expected were white-washed for the occasion ; the feather-beds and cushions were spread out on the wide benches, to enable the visitors to sit, or rather to lie at their ease ; around the walls were hung, by way of ornament, divers articles of both male and female attire, and a variety of towels of different colours ; and on

the tables were spread out table-cloths and covers, embroidered in original designs. Almost every Tartar peasant has a samovar, but, on the occasion we speak of, the samovars were not numerous enough, so that the Mollah's was sent for, and travelled in a boiling state with the others from house to house, where fresh tea was invariably made and presented. After the visits were paid, the Tartars led their honourable and honoured guests into the fields, and there they showed them their games, which were highly amusing, but rather monotonous, for there was neither song nor dance, and scarce a smile on the faces of the players.

These visits, the Doctor tells us, were always finished by a call upon the Mollah, the principal personage in every village. Tea was again presented, but with the addition of raisins, dates, prunes, pistachio nuts, and preserved raspberries. The Mollah took great care on these occasions to show his learning by presenting to the Doctor his pupils. In another room, under the direction of the Mollah's wife, were assembled numerous young girls, who stood with a furl of paper in their hands, and ever and anon chanted verses from the Koran, but in a very disagreeable tone of voice and manner.

In speaking of the hospitality of the Tartars, Dr. Fouks relates that, on one occasion, his carriage happened to break down near a Tartar village;

while the equipage was being repaired, the Doctor with his daughter, to shelter themselves from the summer's heat, entered the yard of a peasant and stood under a shed. The owner of the house having noticed their presence, came out from his house and invited them to partake of his hospitality, which consisted of boiling tea, though the month was July, the hottest in Kazan, and the hour two o'clock in the afternoon.

What particularly strikes every traveller who observes this race, is the calm and harmony that seems to exist in their family circles, even among the women, who, in some houses, are as many as twenty, some of the men having three and even four wives. The laws of the East seem to have imposed on them the stamp of mildness and submission.

They live in general in a cleanly and tidy manner. Their houses are as neat as their means will admit of; five or six times a year they whitewash the walls and ceilings. The women understand well the task of housekeeping: they bake excellent bread, and nowhere can such fine cream be met with as among the Tartars; their *kaimack* (thick boiled cream) has rendered them famous. When they milk the cows they always carefully wash the dug, put on a white apron, and cover the milk with a clean towel. Many Tartars do not milk their cows in the winter: they lay in a large provision of

*kaimack* in the autumn, and several barrels of milk, which gets frozen and keeps in this manner till the spring.

The ordinary food of the richer class of Tartars inhabiting the town of Kazan is as follows. In the morning early they take tea, with which they eat small greasy meat pasties called *peremiadj*. At noon they dine, and the dinner consists of the pasties we have just mentioned with sour milk, called *kazan bikmasi*, and boiled rice, fried in butter with raisins; then they have a round pie, made of meat and rice, which they eat with salted cucumbers; a roast goose or duck with potatoes is then presented, or in its stead a joint of boiled beef, with horse-radish or uncooked sour-kroupt; a dish of cold meat or fish, called *ourouk*, next succeeds, and the repast is invariably ended with tea, which is presented with small greasy patties of the size of a walnut, called *baousack*. At six o'clock in the evening they again drink tea, with cream and *pere-miadjes*, as in the morning. The supper consists of another greasy kind of boiled meat pasties, called *pelmainy*, and a species of boiled macaroni named *lapshee*.

The food of the poorer class of Tartars is as follows. In the morning they drink tea, with a species of loaf called *kalatchi*; their dinner consists of *lapshee* or *pelmainies*, of sour milk or *kaimack* (thick boiled cream), a dish called *salma*, made of

small bits of paste fried in mutton-fat ; in the evening they take tea again, and for supper a dish called *balamuick* or *talkan*, a species of porridge eaten with salt. On holidays they eat roast mutton and one or two dishes prepared from horseflesh, which is a favourite dish likewise with some of the richer Tartars.

One of the laws of Mahomet, that which forbids wine, is everywhere infringed by this portion of the Mussulman community. In the country the Tartars are as greatly addicted to drinking as their Russian neighbours, and share all the evils which arise from this pernicious habit. In the town of Kazan the lower class of Tartars constantly frequent the Russian taverns, called *trackteers*. This propensity has greatly increased within the last twenty years. Many Tartar tradesmen and mechanics daily visit the taverns, and leave there no small sum of money. The first thing they do on entering is to drink two or three glasses of a strong decoction of spirits and aromatic herbs, called *bal-sam* ; then they call for a dish of cold fish in jelly, over which they pour a great quantity of vinegar ; and their favourite beverage, a very strong kind of beer, is then presented. Dr. Fouks asserts, that one Tartar generally drinks on these occasions from five to six bottles, and sometimes even twelve bottles of beer ! While thus engaged they sing their national songs, for they are fond of music, particu-

larly the organ. Here many smoke tobacco, which is never done at home. After finishing the beer they call for tea, and (Dr. Fouks is still our authority) they drink from fifteen to twenty cups ! Often after tea they recommence their patronage of the beer-bottle. A healthy Tartar, the Doctor believes, eats and drinks three times as much as a Russian ; but notwithstanding, quarrels and brawls are rare among them, and if such take place it is a very easy matter to pacify the disputants.

They are particularly fond likewise of delicacies, good dishes, sweets, etc. Dr. Fouks told me that he saw on one occasion a Tartar call in a hawker of ices who passed the window of the tavern where he was sitting, and eat glass after glass with such avidity that soon the whole of the frozen delicacy disappeared. Sometimes they take with them to the tavern a duck or a piece of meat, and give it to be cooked, for they are not allowed by their religion to eat meat killed by Christians. Many of the richer class of Tartar tradesmen, whose business obliges them to be in the town, dine likewise at a Russian tavern, in consequence of the distance of their place of habitation. I need scarcely add that hog's flesh is an object of horror to all.

During the Mussulman fast called Ramazan, the Tartars do not frequent the taverns during the day-time, but go there in crowds at dusk. Many would doubtless not hesitate entering even at that

period in full day, did they not fear the ridicule and disapprobation of their co-religionists. During this fast there exists among them a strange custom : if a Tartar is found to have indulged to excess, either in eating or drinking, he is caught and brought before the Mollah. The latter immediately besmears his face with soot, and in this guise he is driven into the streets, where all who see him, urged by a religious impulse, beat him with sticks, or fling mud at him, until he is able to take refuge somewhere. Dr. Fouks tells us that, on one occasion, a Tartar, during the fast, was seen to leave a tavern ; his countrymen pursued him, but as he ran he had the good luck to meet with another tavern, in which he took refuge till nightfall,—much, as the Doctor remarks, in the way the Roman offenders were wont to do of yore in their temples.

The dress of the Tartars of Kazan is so different from that of every other nation, that it certainly deserves description. They wear a shirt (*koulmiack*) made of calico, sometimes white, sometimes red ; their drawers (*schtann*) are worn very wide, and are made likewise of calico, or occasionally of silk ; their stockings, called *yousk*, are of cotton, or linen. A species of leather stockings, generally of morocco leather, called *itchigi*, red or yellow, are worn over the stockings, or sometimes are substituted for them. Their slippers, called *kalout*, are made of black or green leather. Over the shirt they wear

two garments, somewhat in the shape of a European frock-coat without a collar ; the under one, having no sleeves, is made of silk ; the upper, with sleeves likewise of silk, is called *kasaki*. Over these they wear a long, wide robe, generally of blue cloth, called *tchekmen*, which is attached to the body by a scarf (*poda*). In a pocket of this garment they keep their pocket-handkerchief, called *tchaoulok*. Their heads, which are shaven to the skin, are covered with a species of skull-cap, called *takia* : this is covered, when they go out, with a hat (*bourick*) made of velvet, or cloth, and ornamented with fur : the rich Tartars use for this purpose beaver-skins of great value.

The Tartars get their heads shaved every fortnight, and trim their beards once a week ; once a week they go to the bath. A very singular predilection exists among the lower classes,—that of finding pleasure in being bled. This luxury they enjoy at least once a year ; the spring is generally chosen for the enjoyment. A barber of Kazan (for it is the barbers who bleed here) assured me that he had let blood for upwards of five hundred Tartars in one day, each of whom had paid him fifty kopecks to a rouble for the operation. He had in this manner earned upwards of twenty pounds for letting blood alone. This was indeed profiting by the bloodshed of his fellow-creatures.

## VI.

The Tartar women, as is the case in every Mahometan country, are kept close prisoners in the houses and harems of their husbands and parents. They are allowed to remove the thick veils which cover their faces in their bedrooms alone : not the brothers of their husband, nor even their own uncles and cousins, are allowed to behold their features. They do not occupy themselves with any kind of work, not even needlework ; the concerns of the house, buying, cooking, etc. etc., are confided to old women, or are performed by male attendants ; the younger females having nothing to do but to dress, eat, drink, sleep, and please their husbands. A rich Tartar woman, hardly has she left her bed, when she begins her daily task of painting her face rouge and white ; then she clothes herself in her gaudy vestments of gold and silver texture, puts on her various ornaments, rings, necklaces, bracelets, etc. etc. ; and this done, she throws herself on the soft Turkish sofa, on which she almost lies buried. The *samovar* (tea-urn) is then brought her. She makes the tea herself, and drinks cup after cup of it until the perspiration flows down her face, washing away at the same time all the paint with which she had adorned her face ; this necessarily requires that she should spend a couple of hours more at the toilet, by which time she is

ready for her breakfast, which consists of a variety of greasy dishes. This over, she again throws herself on the sofa, and remains there, half sleeping, half waking, till a female friend probably drops in to see her, upon which the samovar again makes its appearance, and our fair Tartar drinks again as much tea as she did in the morning—to say the least, not less than seven or eight cups. The harmony of her face is again destroyed by the copious flow of perspiration that ensues, and she is forced to paint her face afresh, in order to appear at dinner in all her charms in the presence of her husband. After dinner, tea is once more presented ; indeed this beverage seems indispensable to the Tartars ; they assure you that it is absolutely necessary to drink it, in order to facilitate digestion after their meals. Having partaken a third time of tea to her heart's content, our Tartar lady then enjoys a nap ; on awaking, she sometimes takes it into her head to go and pay a visit to some female friend; for this purpose she changes the dress shewore in the morning for some other of a still more expensive nature, she then gets into a square, prison-like two-horsed carriage, and arrives at the house of her acquaintance, where, completely buried in the thick veils which cover her head and face, she makes her way to the apartment of her friend, scarce daring to show the point of her nose as she passes along. The Tartar women of the richer class do not even

enjoy the privilege of breathing the fresh air. There are no gardens attached to their houses, or if there are, they are so small that they scarcely dare go into them without covering themselves from head to foot, lest they should meet one of their male relations living in the same house. They hardly dare to look from their windows in the street, lest they should be observed by some passer-by.

Such is the life of the richer class of Tartar women. Monotonous and tedious as it is, they do not however complain nor even find it painful; on the contrary, they look upon the mode of living among European women as sinful in the extreme; they believe that a European female will never go to heaven, and give thanks to God that he created them Mahometans.

We have spoken of the dress of the Tartar women; the reader will doubtless be desirous to know of what it consists. Their costume is very rich and elegant; they wear a species of robe of rich thick silk or satin, the sleeves being very large and long, sometimes even falling as low as the ground; the upper part of these robes is embroidered in front with gold; over this they wear a kind of capote, very wide, and generally made of gold brocade or some similar stuff gorgeously embroidered. They wear on their head a silk cap bordered with fur, which hangs down on one side and ends in a

a point having a golden tassel attached to it ; the cap we have described is sometimes adorned with precious stones, and ancient gold and silver coins. Their hair falls behind in long tresses, the ends of which are tied up with bows of ribands. Sometimes these tresses are covered with long bands, to which are attached various coins and ornaments. The Tartar women wear moreover a profusion of pearls, necklaces, gold and silver bracelets, finger-rings, ear-rings, chains, etc., etc.

The dress of a rich Tartar woman, as may be supposed from the brief description we have given, is an affair of no trifling expense to her husband. We will give here a list of the various articles which form a complete Tartar costume, with their prices. We are indebted for this list to Doctor Fouks, of whom we have before spoken.

1. A head-dress, in the form of a cap, made of silk material, ornamented with gold lace and fringe, costing about £2. 10*s.*

2. Ear-rings, called in Tartar, *'alka-kashli*, or *tchelderlé*; generally made of silver-gilt, price about £1. 10*s.*

3. A necklace (*kaptarma*), likewise of silver-gilt and stones, generally turquoises, and gilt Russian coins, the portrait being turned inwards : £3.

4. A robe (*koulmiack*), made of printed cotton, nankeen, or of silk, very gaudy, embroidered about the neck with fringes : about £4. (If this be made,

as is often the case, of thick silk and satin, its value amounts to £15.

5. Pantaloons (*schtannee*), generally made of silk, very wide and gaudy patterns, costing about 15*s.*

6. A species of leather stocking, generally morocco, skilfully worked in gold and silver, value from £1 to £1. 10*s.* In place of stockings they envelope their feet in thin strips of linen, or with thin towels.

7. Slippers made of red morocco, worked in gold: value 10*s.*

8. A species of kerchief called *koukren*, to cover the chest, made of silk and satin stuff, bordered with gold fringes: value 10*s.*

9. A species of jacket without sleeves, falling as low as the knee, made of silk with fringes, and with a pocket on the left side for the pocket-handkerchief, which the Tartar women never carry in their hands: value about £18.

10. A robe called *dgilan*, made of cloth of gold, adorned with fringes and very long and wide sleeves, costing, such as it is worn by the rich, £100. (N.B. The *dgilan* is, at the present day, getting out of fashion.)

11. A large silk kerchief (*koushee-tchaoulok*), with gold-worked flowers, falling on the back: value about £13.

12. Bracelets (*mertchem-blazeck*), silver-gilt with inscriptions, with precious stones, particularly the

sardonyx and topaz, to which are attached Dutch gold ducats, and several strings of pearls ; this most important part of a Tartar lady's dress costs in general about £150.

13. A set of rings, called *djouzouk*, one ring worn on each finger, silver-gilt, set with topazes, amethysts, and pearls. The ten rings cost £25.

14. A long tress of hair, called *tchoulpeg*, with which is interwoven large silver coins ; to the end of this are attached several silver coins, to produce a ringing sound : value £5.

15. A sash, called *boutey*, thrown over the left shoulder, ornamented with stones, pearls, and minerals. At the end of this sash, on the left side, is sewn a pocket, in which is kept a small written copy of the Koran. A piece of wood is often sewn up in this pocket in place of the Koran. This sash often costs as much as £150.

It will be seen by those readers who had the patience to read though this list of gowns, robes, kerchiefs, jewels, ornaments, etc., that the dress of one Tartar lady costs no less a sum than £500. The expense is doubled, trebled, etc., according to the number of wives the Tartar keeps. Let this serve as a hint to European husbands, who so often and so unjustly complain of their wives, and charge them so inconsistently with extravagance and love of dress.

Dr. Fouks tells us that, till within thirty years back, the Tartar women wore a head-dress much in the shape of a sugar-loaf, made of rich silk, and

covered with Russian gilt roubles and smaller coins intermixed with corals and pearls ; this cone-shaped *coiffure* ended with a gilt button. This portion of the female costume is almost wholly out of fashion ; it will be found however in one of the drawings we made in Kazan, of Tartar costumes.

"A Tartar woman," says the Doctor, "thus clad in this heavy and expensive dress, walks very much like a goose." And for whom is all this magnificent attire put on ? For the husband alone, or for the sisters and female friends of the lady. Is not this truly vexatious ?

A Tartar lady, when she goes a-visiting, performs her toilet in the following manner :—she first washes herself from head to foot, then puts on a clean chemise, paints her face thickly with white and red paint, dyes her brows as black as possible, in order to make her eyes look as bright as she can, then she blackens her teeth and rubs her nails with a composition made of dry flowers of balsam, and mixed with alum-water : this composition gives an orange tint to the nails. After these various cosmetical preparations, the Tartar lady puts on the different dresses we have described, not forgetting to rub her bosom with otto of roses. In this guise she sets out in her box-like carriage to pay her visits. She first goes to the wife of the Mollah, then to the wife of the Assantcha, then to the wives of the principal merchants, according to their rank and fortune. All these visits are paid without any curt-

seying or kissing, but merely by extending their hands and arms to shake those of the person visited. Such is Tartar etiquette. Should the lady by chance fall into the mistake of going first to the merchant's wife, instead of, as rank required, to the Mollah's, the latter does not receive the proffered courtesy, but, according to custom, raises both her hands, the palms being turned forward as a mark of her displeasure and indignation.

The second class of Tartar women may be considered those who are not so rich as the former, or who, though they be as rich, do not enjoy the same rank or consideration. They lead a somewhat freer mode of existence than their wealthier countrywomen; that is to say, they are allowed to breathe the air with a little more freedom, and even go so far as occasionally to expose the end of their noses to observation; they have the courage to sit at their windows, and do not always run away like frightened sheep when they see a man passing. The second class of Tartars likewise occupy themselves with their domestic duties, direct the cooking department, sometimes even make the pies and puddings themselves, and go into the yard and see if the stable and cow-house be clean and in order. On these occasions, they do not always hide their faces on meeting any male member of the household. They often go a-visiting on foot, exposing on these occasions their entire nose and one eye.

The third class of Tartar women enjoys still greater freedom. They perform their domestic duties in the house and the kitchen, without any assistance ; they milk the cows, and go about the town, though with covered heads, yet often with half the face exposed to notice. They are expert at needlework ; you will find among them skilful dress-makers, embroiderers, and the greater part of the leatheren stockings called *itchigi* are made by them.

## VII.

And now, shut up as the better class of Tartar women are, in their houses, strict as they are in the performance of their religious ceremonies, do you think, gentle reader, that that treacherous little god, Love, can possibly find his way among them, and wound their hearts with his mischievous arrows ? He can indeed ; and the following interesting account, which I owe to my learned friend Doctor Fouks, will furnish you with a positive proof.

The Doctor says, he was long in doubt on this head, and resolved to make the experiment. It was certainly a difficult matter to investigate, but good-will and perseverance can do much. This is how he set about the task, which his professional calling of physician helped him to accomplish. Do not blame the learned Doctor, gentle reader ; what ought not man do for the love of science, and desire of information ? The heart of a Tartar woman was a

mystery, and our erudite friend resolved to unfold it to the lovers of knowledge. The Doctor says it was some time before he could attain the object of his wishes; at length chance threw in his way an old woman, (why are old women always in the way on such occasions?) whom he attended during a difficult illness, and saved her life, or at least made her think he had done so, which was all the same as regarded his plans and purposes. This grateful old lady rewarded her preserver by introducing him to *two* young Tartar females, (why should not one have sufficed?) The Doctor took great pains to assure me that it was not only a most justifiable curiosity that first prompted him to the adventure, but that his courtship was carried on with the most exemplary, saint-like abnegation and indifference that can possibly be imagined. We are bound in common charity to believe him, and without wishing to penetrate, with a suspicious eye, into the innocent intrigues and guileless meetings of the lovers, we will content ourselves with reading their correspondence, at least that part which came from the Doctor's Tartar sweethearts. How precious such love-letters are, I need not inform my readers.

*Letters translated literally from the Tartar.*

*First Letter, written in Prose.*

"He is the living God\*! Fortunate and beloved be-

\* This is always the form used in commencing letters among the Tartars.

ing, before whom I bend the knee. Precious soul ! thou who hast awoke my tenderest passion, and plunged me into a sea of suffering ! possessor of my heart, I bend a lowly knee before thee ; and, though distance divides us, our hearts are close to each other. I kiss the ground for thy sake, and thread prayers of pearls into verses [remember, reader, I am translating word for word] and send them to you. Merciful friend, do not abandon me ! cast a friendly look upon me ! appear, my belovèd star ! shine upon me, my glowing sun ! Oh, live, live long, my joy ! May God lengthen your days for my sake."

Well, my fair Christian readers, and how do you like this love-letter ? Do you think you could write one more full of affection, devotedness, not to speak of humility, (remember the knees !) than that I have given—the outbreakings of a wounded Tartar heart? And now that you have had a specimen of prose, you shall have a specimen of verse, in order to see which you like the best.

*The Verses.*

" It is an order in creation, it is an order in the Koran, Love God, and love your neighbour. What neighbour is more near and dear to me than thou art, merciful friend ! . . . . Oh ! my beloved ! he shall eat from a golden dish, and with a silver spoon ; he shall sit upon a chair adorned with precious stones ; let him enjoy himself in the world ; what matter, provided he loves me ? . . . . The angels live in the skies, but my angel lives with me ! Send me a letter : a letter from a friend is half a meeting. Your dress is

armour [apparently our Tartar correspondent had a liking for the sons of Mars] ; your food is fruit ; but my dress is the love I bear you, my food is thinking about you. O God, Thou alone knowest how much I love him ! . . . . Golden rings and diamond bracelets do not give me joy ; my joy is thee, and one thought of thee can drive away my sorrow.

“ In the garden there are many flowers, many various flowers ; but that flower which recalls you to my mind, my beloved friend, is the most short-lived of any. Your brows are black as the night ; your form is more stately than the palm-tree : such as you the world seldom can boast of.”

A few words more in prose followed the verse :

“ For God’s sake, do not leave me, beloved friend. Believe, my earthly god, that without your merciful attention, I shall perish or despise my existence.”

*Second Letter, in Prose.*

“ He is the living God ! Fortunate object of my love, blackness of my eyes, and wound of my heart ! thou who madest me captive and buried my passion in an ocean of suffering, before thee I bend my knee, and, far removed though I be, still my heart is near you ; I kiss you, and send pearls of salutation to you. If you wish to hear aught about me, know then, I am burning with love for thee : I am a sufferer, a martyr, a victim. I waited for you, and waited long ; but, may God forgive you, you did not come to me. I heard that you were ill : that news restored me to life. May God preserve you for me ! I am ready to abandon all and to fly to thee. Expect me next Thursday : if I hear that you are not

by that time restored to health and love, I will certainly fly to see you, spite of all risks. Write to me, dear friend; write to me, and let me know how you are.

“Since the time when first I saw you, darkness has vanished, and light has appeared.

“Thou art my sun, my heavenly delight! I send you pearls of prayers, the essence of my wishes.”

*Third Letter, in Prose.*

“Oh! thou who formest a corner of my heart, blackness of my eyes, dear friend, whom I love as much as my soul, nay, more than my soul, I bend my knee before thee, and, kissing the earth, I send thee a thousand prayers, adorned with pearls of tears and with the sighs of my heart. Art thou curious to know how I am? I am drowned in the sea of my passion for thee; I am consumed by the fire of love. Why and wherefore do I live in this mortal form? My love for thee has poisoned my existence, my heart is all in wounds.

“Oh, thou beauty of my life and light of my eyes! thou dost not know what is passing in my heart: Allah alone knows that. When I wish to speak, I can only pronounce thy name; when I wish to think of something, nothing enters my mind but thoughts of thee. The hour of eating arrives—I can get nothing down my throat; the time for sleeping comes, and I cannot close my eyes; my thoughts are never absent a minute from thee, nor could I live without thee. Oh! wonder above all wonders! Often do I say to myself, thou canst not be loved by him. Be reasonable, and think of thyself. Alas! where can I find reason? where can I find patience? Both are lost in the abyss of my passion. Oh,

Allah! for what sins am I condemned to this suffering? to feel deeply, to love passionately, yet not to be loved, and not to have the power to control my affections! Oh, my friend, if thou couldst feel even a portion of my sufferings, thou wouldst certainly not be able to bear the weight of it!

“If, on the receipt of this letter, thou wilt favour me with an answer, I shall consider myself the happiest of the happy. Its contents will be a balm to my wounded heart; every word will afford me consolation.

“I know not what I am writing; pardon my folly; my mind is disordered, it is distracted with thoughts of thee. My soul, how I love thee! pray to God for me.”

*Verses.*

“All that we need can be satisfied: hunger can be satisfied with a piece of bread, thirst with a draught of water, but what can satisfy my love for thee?

“Alas! thou art passing your time in the midst of pleasures, I am passing mine in the midst of sighs and sadness; thou art blooming in the midst of the world like a flower of Paradise, I am fading and perishing here in the midst of solitude and silence.

“The Volga flows rapidly, time flies still more rapidly, but how slowly move the minutes of absence!”

You see now, my fair readers, that the Tartar women are as thoroughly versed as you in the theory of loving and the language of love. In the latter, at least, I believe they surpass you. We will not however stop to dispute about the matter; suffice it to have proved to you that love is no

stranger among the fair captives of Tartary, who, when they wish to deceive their lords and masters, (a circumstance let us trust of very rare occurrence) find some means to meet the object of their tender passion. Among the better class of Tartar women, such things however seldom happen: it is principally among the third class of the Tartar population that the mischievous god plays his most active part. This Dr. Fouks supposes to be owing to the following circumstance. He says that in the spring, many Bucharians, on their way to the great fair of Nijney Novgorod, arrive in Kazan, and live there for four or five months. Each of these visitors, through the medium of the *svakhas* (old women whose business is marriage-making), select a bride, and generally one not older than fifteen years; this age to some seems even too advanced, and they will have no wife who is more than thirteen or even twelve years old. It may naturally be supposed that it is not from among the richer class that the *svakha* procures the required spouse, but the *kalym* (the price paid for a wife, of which we shall speak hereafter) seduces the poorer class of Tartars, who give their daughters without remorse to their Bucharian visitors. The latter seldom live with their wives more than two or three months, and previous to returning home, give an act of divorce to their young spouses, which allows of their marrying the next year some fresh visitor.

The Tartars of Kazan are averse to marrying a woman who has been the wife of a Bucharian, and these unfortunate widows of thirteen are in consequence exposed to temptations which their richer and more fortunate countrywomen know not. Let us pity them, and not blame them too harshly.

One word more about the Tartar women. Dr. Fouks does not consider them to be pretty; but he speaks only of those few he has had an opportunity of seeing, namely, the wives and daughters of the poorer classes. This is how he describes them. They are middle-sized, rather stout than otherwise; like the men they stand erect, but walk badly: one cause of this is their heavy costume, which renders their gait awkward and constrained.

### VIII.

The religious customs of the Tartars relating to the birth and betrothal of their children, must appear to the European very extraordinary and striking. We will briefly describe these epochs in the life of a Tartar.

The *accouchement* of a Tartar woman is looked upon as a circumstance of greater importance among the Tartars than probably among any other race I know of. It becomes, in fact, a species of family *fête*, particularly with the rich, with whom all the connecting circumstances are performed in the most imposing manner. With the latter, the

midwife is invited to attend and to live in the house some days before the expected event. When the child is born, the father is immediately sent for, and the relatives, male and female, are informed of the happy delivery. Three days after the birth, the Mollah is sent for, and placing the child on a table, or sometimes holding it in his arms, he begins the religious ceremonies customary at the period. These are as follows:—the Mollah, with a loud voice, pronounces in the right ear of the child the *azann*, the same prayer which is used from the minaret when the faithful are called to the mosque; he then whispers in the left ear of the child another prayer called *kamett*, and after this gives the child a name. The Mollah is well paid and handsomely treated on this occasion. The ceremony is always accompanied by a feast, to which all the male relatives are invited. For several days after, all the female friends and acquaintances of the mother pay her their visits of congratulation, and each brings with her some present for the new-born child, principally consisting of articles of dress. A mother belonging to the richer class often receives so many gifts on this occasion, that several trunks might be filled with the offerings we have spoken of. Sugar and tea are likewise brought, and various eatables and sweets, etc.

At the age of three or five years the male child has to undergo the ceremony of circumcision; this

is performed again by the Mollah, who receives for the duty a present in money, according to the wealth of the parents; some give as much as £3, some £1, some a few shillings. We said three or five years, and it is worthy of notice that odd numbers are always chosen for the period of performing this ceremony, for the Tartars entertain a superstitious yet deeply-rooted belief that a child circumcised at an age when the number is even, is sure to die.

At seven or eight years of age the boy is sent to school, and the course of instruction he receives lasts five years. Those who wish to become Mollahs or teachers remain still longer.

Their tuition begins with the alphabet; after this they learn to read a book called *Gavtiack*, containing various extracts from the Koran; then they read the Tartar books printed in Kazan, called *Pirgouly*, *Soubatoulgazizeen*, *Faouzounnazat*, and *Stouany*, which contain explanations of the Koran in prose and verse; and, lastly, they study the book of Mukhammed Effendi, on the art of commerce, which forms the principal and almost sole occupation of the Tartars of Kazan. To this is often added the study of the Arabic grammar, called *Nakhou*.

We shall speak more in another page of this subject, as well as of the schools of Kazan. With regard to the female portion of the Tartar race, the

richer classes have their daughters taught to read and write by the wife of the Mollah ; but the education of the greater number is confined to learning how to sew and embroider, particularly embroidery in gold and silver, for which the Tartar women have become so famous.

But to return to the men. The period arrives for marrying. The Tartar wants a wife ; but how is he to choose one ? for the Mahometan laws strictly forbid the woman to look at any man before she is married, and the bridegroom is as strictly forbidden to look at his bride. The votary of Hymen is therefore reduced to the inevitable necessity of committing a sin (and a great one the Mahometans think it), or of taking a wife such as good or ill luck may send him. The greatest part, I am sorry to say, prefer sinning, and this is how they go to work. There are, as we have before said, both among the Tartars and the Russians, certain old women who make a regular profession of these delicate matters, and who are called in Russ *Svakhas*,—in Tartar, *Yaoutchis*. To these respectable old ladies the bridegroom addresses himself in his emergency, and the Yaoutchi undertakes to arrange the business to his satisfaction. She gives, in consequence, the bridegroom to know at what hour the maiden may be found sitting at her window, or when she will be on a visit with one of her friends, with whom the bridegroom chances to be

acquainted, and then, *coute qui coute*, though both soul and body seem at stake, the maiden opens boldly her veil, and gives the bridegroom an opportunity of beholding her features. This done, if she pleases the suitor, he sends without delay the Yaoutchi to the house of the father, and consent or refusal is immediately signified by the latter.

In the case of consent, on the following day the relations of the maiden discuss the subject of the *kalym*,—the price which a Tartar is bound to pay for his wife, and which in Kazan varies from three thousand to five thousand roubles (from £150 to £250), according to the fortune of the bridegroom. Among the poorer classes the *kalym* is from fifty to five hundred roubles (from £2 to £25 sterling). Half of the *kalym* is paid at the betrothal; the other half is kept back till the marriage is over, and in case a divorce should be desired by the husband. The Mahometan laws are really cruel in this respect to womankind: they allow the husband to separate from his wife whenever he may wish to do so; and on the very next day after the marriage the former has the tyrannical right to send home his bride to her father, in case he may have found some reason to be dissatisfied with her. In such cases this is how they arrange the matter. They send for the Mollah, state the cause of complaint, and the latter gives the husband a letter of

divorce, a copy of which is forwarded to the father when his daughter returns to her home. In doing this, the husband is bound to give his wife the remaining half of the kalym.

From the period of the betrothal the bridegroom sends presents daily to his bride, consisting of articles of dress, gold and silver jewels, pearls, and ornaments, varying in value according to the means and circumstances of the giver. On the marriage-day the bridegroom is bound to send to his wife a small butt of honey and another of butter; both these articles are indispensable to a Tartar marriage. With these likewise commence the marriage-feast, and the repast given to celebrate the birth of a child. On one dish is placed the honey, and on the other the butter, and these are in succession presented to the guests, who help themselves copiously to both, which they spread upon slices of bread and eat with the greatest appetite.

The marriage-feasts commence with the Tartars an entire week before the wedding, and are celebrated daily at the houses of the bridegroom and bride; on one day the men assemble to gormandize at the house of the former, and the next the women do the same at the abode of the latter.

The bridegroom, to the very day of the marriage, does not enter the house of his bride, who likewise takes no part in the feasting enjoyed by her female friends, but remains shut up in her private room.

Dr. Fouks tells us that he had constant opportunities of seeing and taking part in the marriage feasts of the men, but that he found no possibility of assisting at the feast of the women, and many years, spite of every endeavour he made to that effect, he was always unsuccessful. At length an unexpected circumstance occurred, which enabled him to satisfy his curiosity. He attended, he says, a rich Tartar woman during a long and severe illness, and she out of gratitude seemed ready to do for him anything in her power. Whilst she was still under his hands, her son resolved to marry. As a reward for the cure he had effected, the Doctor asked the Tartar lady to allow him to witness the female marriage feast. His Tartar patient, taken by surprise, trembled at first from fear, and did her best to impress upon him the impossibility of such a permission, so entirely in opposition to their religion and customs; but the Doctor seems to have maintained his point, and, using all his authority as a physician, he at last induced her to consent. What helped much to bring about the matter, was the fact of her being a widow and the oldest in the house. But while she consented, she supplicated the Doctor to keep the affair a secret, and the following plan was resolved upon. She invited the Doctor's wife to the feast and requested her to arrive with her husband at dusk, promising to meet them on the staircase. What was said, was done. She led the

Doctor and his spouse to a room, wherein, for the better accommodation of the guests, all the trunks from the different rooms of the house had been brought. The whole of the room was lined with these cases, and in the middle of the apartment stood a round table, on which were placed several plates with various Bucharian dried fruit, for the entertainment of the Doctor's wife. A chair was placed for the Doctor between the boxes. In this room was a door which communicated with the principal apartment designed for the feast: this door had been hung with a curtain of thick Bucharian silk. The mistress of the house requested the Doctor's wife to go into the reception-room, and the Doctor was left in the trunk-room, a small rent having been made in the tapestry by the mistress of the house, in order that he might see what was going on. None of the visitors had as yet arrived. Around the walls of the feasting chamber were placed wide sofa-like benches, covered with Persian carpets, and on some of these were spread feather-beds and cushions. The floor was likewise covered with carpets of a commoner kind, and more than a dozen round tables were placed in different parts of the room. These tables were very low, not more than half a yard high, and were all covered with white or coloured table-cloths. Near the benches were likewise placed a variety of smaller tables, loaded with sweetmeats, dried fruit, nuts, etc. The room

was very badly lighted by the aid of a few tallow candles, which were left to burn without snuffing.

At length the guests began to arrive, one by one, painted and dressed out in their grandest attire, and covered from top to toe with large shawls of cloth of gold. On entering the room, they took these off, and remained in their rich robes of golden texture, their heads uncovered. (Little did the poor innocents imagine that the eye of the Giaour was on them!) On their heads they wore, some of them silk or velvet kerchiefs, embroidered with gold, others a kind of cap, bound with beaver-skin fur, and all more or less were decked with artificial flowers of European manufacture. These last-named ornaments assorted ill with their Asiatic dresses. The Tartar women, within the last few years, have taken a fancy to mixing up European fashions with their costume : they deck their robes with wide silk ribands, which was formerly never done ; many have their sleeves cut narrower in order to be able to get their bracelets over them, and some even go so far as to wear curls. They have acquired such a passion for artificial flowers that some of the poorer Tartar women have learned to make flowers of this description, which, indifferent as they are, they sell to their richer neighbours at prices treble their value. But to return to the feast.

Each guest, on arriving, presented some gift or offering to the bride. Some of her relations brought

her rich stuffs and silks for making various portions of her dress ; others gave her handkerchiefs, shawls, etc. Her acquaintances brought her caps, ribands, gold and silver lace, tassels, etc. All the presents were placed upon tables prepared for that purpose. The guests, on entering the room, first pronounced the ordinary congratulations, then went and laid their offerings on the tables, in the presence of the bride ; after this they examined the gifts of the other visitors, and made their remarks upon them.

The ceremony of receiving the guests and their presents lasted a long time. The Doctor says, he remarked that several Tartar women, though richly dressed, did not bring any gifts to the bride. The mistress of the house afterwards informed him that these were poor acquaintances ; that the dresses they wore were borrowed for the occasion, and that they came to receive and not to give presents. He adds, that it is one of the virtues of the Tartar race, that they do not exclude from their feasts their poorer friends, but treat them in the same manner as they do their wealthy acquaintances.

When all the guests invited were assembled together, tea was presented. It were hard to say how many samovars were brought into the room, or how many times they were replenished with boiling water. The mistress of the house and her relations carried round the tea on several trays. "The

guests," says the Doctor "drank so long and with such appetite, that it would be impossible to say how many cups fell to the share of each. At this period of the entertainment my wife with the mistress of the house came into the room where I was standing, and we were both in our turns regaled with the best tea, called *khanskie*, or royal tea. While we were thus engaged, the mistress of the house kept her stand near the curtain, apparently dreading lest some inquisitive guest should take it into her head to peep into the room, which would have produced an awful catastrophe :" and upon the least sign of suspicion the Doctor was forced to run and hide himself in a corner, behind a screen which had been purposely placed there by way of precaution.

After taking tea, the Tartar ladies began to partake of the sweetmeats, but in a very becoming manner, each taking a little, and without showing the least avidity or eagerness; some tied up the good things they had selected, in a corner of their pocket-handkerchiefs, to give them doubtless to their children. After some time preparations were made for supper. The richer and more important of the guests took their places, in the Turkish fashion, on the wide benches covered with carpets, but managed to seat themselves so dexterously as to show their feet, and their gold-embroidered *itchigis*, of which they are so proud. The rest of the guests squatted themselves on the ground round the low

tables we have spoken of, and appeared to wait with impatience the serving of the supper: it began with the two marriage delicacies, honey and butter. Several dishes were presented,—on some of which was the honey, on others the butter, accompanied by a huge tray filled with slices of white bread of their own baking. A plate was placed before each of the guests, and the dishes were first presented to the fair ones seated on the benches, then to those squatted on the ground. Each of the fair visitors took in her turn a spoonful or two of honey, and a piece of butter, which they spread on the bread, and seemed to eat with a peculiar air of gravity and satisfaction, as if there was something mysterious and solemn in the food they were devouring. The second dish presented was something which resembled *lapshee* with mutton; the third, *pel-mainies*; the fourth, a long pastry with cabbage; the fifth, a pastry with meat; the sixth, a round pastry made of chickens and eggs; the seventh, fried rice with hashed mutton; the eighth, boiled beef with onions and red vinegar; the ninth, boiled fish (*sevrouga*); the tenth, roast mutton; the eleventh, roast goose; the twelfth, roast duck; the thirteenth, roast fowls; the fourteenth, roast turkey; the fifteenth, a small fish called *karasee*, prepared with eggs, in the shape of an omelet; the sixteenth, fried fish, called *leschee*; the seventeenth, fried rice and raisins; and the eighteenth, cakes, tarts, and

sweetmeats,—no less than ten dishes of which were presented.

At the termination of this copious and almost endless repast, the mistress of the house brought from another room several quires of paper, a sheet of which was given to each of the guests. Two Tartar servants followed her, carrying on a tray an enormous cake, composed of different kinds of fruit and nuts, and made of flour, butter, and honey: a cake like this is always sent to the house of the bride for regaling the guests. The cake was cut into pieces, and was presented to the visitors in succession, beginning with the oldest; each took a slice, and, after having tasted it, wrapped it up in the sheet of paper and then in their handkerchiefs, in order to bring it home to the male members of their respective families.

“I remarked moreover,” says the Doctor, “that salted cucumbers cut into small slices were presented, not with the roast-meat, as is the custom among the Russians, but separately, and that the guests—though they had previously partaken of at least ten dishes—found means to eat of these salted cucumbers with avidity and in great abundance.”

The Doctor adds, that the duration of the feast began at length to try his patience; and well it might. The supper, which had begun at nine o’clock in the evening, was scarcely finished at the dawn of day. The lazy movements of the Tartar servants, the

great quantity of dishes, and the slowness with which the guests masticated their food, seemed to render the supper interminable. Each dish was brought successively into the room in which the Doctor and his wife were sitting ; both, out of curiosity, tasted a little of their contents, which they did not, it seems, find much to their taste.

It was very late, or rather very early, when the Tartar ladies, seated on the benches and feather-beds, began to give signs of movement : some of them rose up ; others, though they still kept their seats, began to cough, as if to show how amply they had filled their stomachs. The guests squatted on the ground imitated their example ; but a few did not stir,—these were the poor. To the latter, the mistress of the house brought a plate filled with pieces of silver money, in value from half-a-crown to a sixpence, which she distributed among them. In doing this, she first gave to the Mollah's wife a red bank-note, about ten shillings in value, then a sol-kove (three shillings) to each of her relations ; and the remainder of the money she distributed among the poor, putting it into their hands in so dexterous a manner, that it was impossible to remark what was the value of the coin she presented.

Such, gentle reader, is the description, in an abridged form, which Dr. Fouks gives us of a marriage feast among the female portion of the Tartars of Kazan. It is one of the most important and

most animated of any that this race celebrates ; though, with all its delights, it will seem, I fear, a dull entertainment to many a spoilt European. There is neither dancing nor singing, and no fun or frolic, on these occasions ; the guests seem so entirely occupied with the joys of eating that they can hardly spare a moment even for chatting, and would consider it a sin to let pass a single dish without partaking of its contents.

## IX.

We are indebted to Dr. Fouks for the description of the women's feast, which forms the subject of our preceding section ; it is to him again we owe the account of a Tartar marriage, which we now offer to our readers. The following details are doubly valuable from the fact of their being the result of the personal observation of a learned man, who not only spent almost the whole of his life in the town of Kazan, but understood the Tartar language, and whose description may in consequence be thoroughly relied on.

"I was invited (says the Doctor) by the same old lady who allowed me to witness the women's feast, to be present at the marriage of her son ; and on the appointed day I set out for the house of the bridegroom. I found very few guests when I arrived ; a few aged Tartars were walking about the rooms, discussing some topic in a low tone of voice.

The guests were slow in coming; but when all had arrived, the Mollah was sent for, and this important personage entered the room with the long stick in his hand, which he uses during divine service, and on all religious ceremonies. With a grave and dignified air he moved from side to side, receiving the salutations of all around him. To those who approached him he extended his hand, which they took between both of theirs as a mark of respect. This same form is used on ordinary greetings, the elder Tartar extending his hand, which the younger shakes in the manner alluded to. The room in which the guests had assembled was entirely unfurnished; not a chair nor a trunk was to be seen, but the whole floor was covered with carpets. Up to the arrival of the Mollah all the guests had remained standing; but when he took his seat on the ground in one of the corners of the room, all the Tartars followed his example, and squatted themselves, in the Oriental fashion, on the carpets. Tea was now presented, and much time was spent in drinking it, after which preparations were made for supper. Aware of this, the Tartars seated themselves in pairs, and before each pair was placed a plate, with two wooden spoons, and a long towel supplied the place of napkins.

The first dish consisted of butter and honey, which were presented apart on two dishes. The Tartars took a spoonful of each, which they ate

with the same mysterious, solemn air which the faces of the women had had. Various dishes were then presented,—almost the same as had been chosen for the women's feast, and quite as numerous.

After supper—and this, by the bye, lasted very long—to each of the guests a glass of hydromel was presented. This they drank to the very last drop; after which, wiping their beards with the towel, they first set to coughing, and then from their throats issued a species of hideous chant, some singing in basso, some in tenor, some in alto, and all taking part in the harmony. This chant was sung as a sign that all had stuffed to their stomachs' content, and was used in token of thanks to the lord of the mansion, who had so liberally regaled them.

On the termination of this extraordinary concert the Tartars rose, and placed money on the towel which had been spread out on the floor; some giving a red note, value about ten shillings; some a blue note, five shillings; some a silver rouble, three shillings. This money was collected for the bride, who, on the day of the marriage and during this feast, is seated in the bridal chamber. This money collection is called *sherbet*, in consequence of a custom which formerly existed of filling the cup in which the money was brought to the bride with the well-known Asiatic beverage called sherbet; and the bride, by taking the cup, signified her consent to the nuptials.

In the same manner, (though not in a cup with sherbet, but simply on a plate,) the father of the bride carried the money to his daughter, and on returning into the room informed the Mollah that it had been accepted. After this had been announced, the bridegroom, who had been standing near the door, was summoned, and the Mollah asked him whether he consented to the marriage ; his answer was naturally a “ Yes ! ” The Mollah then asked the father whether the *kalym* had been received, and some other questions ; this done, he coughed thrice, in which he was imitated by all the Tartars ; stroked his beard, the company doing the same ; and began to pronounce, half chanting, half reading, the following prayer, which is customary at the marriage ceremony :—

“ Thanks be to God, who gave us the power of speech, and bestowed on us the gift of eloquence !

“ He, the Most High, created everything for the benefit of man.

“ He forbade all that was injurious, and marked out all that was useful.

“ He ordained us to marry and forbade depravity.

“ He, the Most High, says (in the Koran), Take unto yourselves as wives the women that please you,—*two, three, even four!*

“ Oh, Eternally Beneficent ! we owe thee adoration and gratitude for thy favours.

“ Oh, Boundless Bestower of gifts ! above all, we owe Thee gratitude for the gift of marriage.

"Guide us, O Lord ! unto plenty and contentment, and stamp all our actions with Thy perfection.

"We here testify, that there is no God but Allah, the one and companionless ; and we testify that Mahomet is His messenger and servant, the most perfect of mortals created by God.

"Yes ! may the blessing of God descend on the best of his creatures, Mahomet, sent from God by a miracle, as well as upon his family and descendants, the saints who taught us the Truth.

"Yes ! God, who directed us in the way of Truth, to Islam, marked out marriage as the barrier between what is lawful and unlawful.

"Thus speaketh the Prophet, who saith : 'Marriage is my *sounnett* (law). Whoever condemns my *sounnett* belongs not to me. Marriage is the act of taking to one's bosom the woman beloved, and the *kalym* shall be arranged by common consent. Let the pair united be blessed : may the mercy and favour of God, who is all-merciful and all-generous, descend upon them !'"

After this, the Mollah, addressing himself to the father of the bride, asks the following question in the following words :—

"By order of the God of heaven and earth, Creator of light and darkness, and by the *sounnett* of this great prophet, *Mahomet Moustapha*, (may the blessing of God be upon him and all his family !) in accordance with the rules of the sect of Imam Aazani (the Mahometan sect existing among the Tartars of Kazan), and after the directions given by the Imam Abou Youssouf Al Kazi, and the

Imam Mahomet, the son of Al Hassan (the names of the founders of the sect), in the presence of the persons here assembled, who are witnesses on the occasion, with the consent of both parties (the bridegroom and bride), and one thousand roubles having been paid as kalym, I (the Mollah) wish to know whether you (addressing himself to the father of the bride) consent to give your lawful daughter (who has herself consented) in marriage, according to the rites and laws of the Mahometan persuasion, to —— the son of —— ? ”

*Answer.* “ I consent : I give her.”

“ And you (the Mollah addresses by name the father of the bridegroom), do you, commissioned by your son (N.B. Neither the bridegroom nor bride assist at the ceremony), consent to take —— the daughter of ——, giving such a sum as kalym, as the lawful wife of your son ? ”

*Answer.* “ I consent : I take her.”

The Mollah thereupon says “ Amen ; ” and with this the marriage ceremony is concluded.

The Mollah then rises from the ground, and all the guests follow his example.

At marriage feasts many Tartars, as do the Russians, drink different wines and beer ; but this is done in an adjoining room, secretly, and unknown to the Mollah, who, upon remarking signs of drunkenness in any one of the guests, bitterly reproves him in the presence of all the society.

After the departure of all the guests, the svakha, or the Yaoutchi (the useful old lady before mentioned) takes the bridegroom by the hand and conducts him to the bridal chamber, where the bride is awaiting him, and locks the door upon both. In that room they remain four entire days ! not leaving it even for a minute ; and no one except the svakha is allowed to enter during that period. On the fifth day the husband, after taking tea, goes home to spend the day with his parents, and returns in the evening to his bride.

In the morning he again directs his way home, and for the first three months, every evening returns to his bride, but at the end of this time goes seldom. Sometimes the bride goes on a visit to the parents of the bridegroom, and after remaining there a day or two, returns back to the house of her own parents. This kind of life continues at least a year, sometimes two, and occasionally three ; after which the wife goes to live entirely with her husband, often bringing with her one or two children.

We omitted saying, that on the day after the marriage the youthful husband, if happy, makes a very handsome present to his bride ; but it sometimes likewise happens, that on the second day, for reasons unnecessary to mention, he leaves her, and takes the act of divorce from the Mollah we have spoken of.

“ I was present (says Dr. Fouks) at a similar cere-

mony in the country. There was no difference in its religious forms, but the feast in noways resembled that I have described. The pies and pasties were made of oatmeal-flour, and the meat-dishes prepared with horse-flesh." What astonished the Doctor most was to see a dish prepared out of the entrails of the horse, filled with a peculiar kind of stuffing: it resembled, he says, in miniature a rugged rock, with its precipices, chasms, caves, etc. Both men and women assisted at the same feast, but not in the same apartment—the men being assembled in the cottage, and the women in a kind of storehouse adjoining.

The Mollah and the rest of the guests began to feast from about two o'clock in the afternoon. Tea was first presented, and at a later period to the women, though we must except the Mollah's wife, who drank tea at the same time as the men. The younger portion of the male guests drank home-brewed beer, which flowed in abundance; the Doctor says he did not remark that any wine was used.

The bridegroom arrived about dusk with some of his young companions. The marriage ceremony was performed shortly after, and on its termination the svakha led the bridegroom to his bride, who awaited him in an adjoining house belonging to one of her uncles.

Dr. Fouks adds, that he witnessed in that same village another ceremony, when the daughter left

her father's house to go for good and all to that of her husband. She had lived with her father even after her marriage upwards of two years and a half, and had given birth in his house to two children.

The departure of the daughter to her husband was rather a sad ceremony. Both the father and mother, shedding tears, escorted their child to the next village, twenty versts distant from that they inhabited.

Before her departure, the daughter exposed her marriage gifts in one of the barns, where a great many Tartar women had assembled around her. Those who wished to see the dowry were bound to make the bride a present in money, and consequently placed on a trunk some coin, from a six-pence to a penny. The dowry was not a mean one: there were one or two handsome robes of silk, embroidered with gold; a nankeen khalat, several robes of printed cotton, a pair of red morocco itchigis, two or three pairs of slippers, a red shawl of thin cloth for covering the head, a kind of cloak made of nankeen, lined with hare-skins, for winter wear, and various articles of dress and ornament. The table-cloths, towels, and bed-linen were all of the bride's own workmanship, and very skilfully made.

While the Tartar women were examining the dowry, a table was covered in the principal cottage with various eatables, such as pasties, honey, butter, kaimack, etc. etc.

The husband, accompanied by some of his relations, arrived for his bride in three kibitkas, harnessed each with a pair of horses ; on his arrival, they immediately took their seats before the table that had been prepared to regale them. While they were feasting, the Tartar women carried the divers articles which formed the wife's dowry, and packed them up in one of the kibitkas ; and the bride in the meantime was busy in painting her face, and, throwing aside her maiden costume, put on that of the married woman. When she was quite ready, she sent her husband as a present a white calico shirt, which one of the Tartars having received, left the *izba* (cottage) with it, and attached it to the *douga* (the wooden hoop used in the Russian harness) of the best kibitka, in such a manner that the shirt formed a kind of flag, which floated above the horse's neck and back. In this kibitka, the wife took her seat with the svakha, and the husband took the fore seat and acted as coachman ; his Tartar companions seated themselves in the other kibitkas, and in this way they drove out of the yard ; the father, mother, and relations of the bride weeping bitterly, in which they were imitated by no few of the Tartars, male and female, who had escorted the bride to the kibitka.

## X.

We have described the births, betrothals, and marriages of the Tartars, and we must now, to

make our tale complete, describe the manner in which they die and are buried. As before, we owe a great part of this section to Dr. Fouks.

When a Tartar becomes dangerously ill, the Mollah is sent for, and the latter reads over the dying man the 36th chapter of the Koran, concerning the resurrection of the dead. If the Mollah cannot come, this is done by some old man or even by an old woman. As soon as the breath has left his body, the corpse is placed by two men on a table, his feet being turned in the direction of Mecca. One of the men pours out water, and the other washes the body, which is then covered with three sheets of white linen or calico. The first sheet, extending from the neck to the knees, is called *kafeen*; the second, which extends from the forehead to the toes, is called *kaml*; and the third, placed over the two others, covers the whole of the body and is tucked round about the head and the feet, so that the corpse is entirely hidden. In this manner the corpse is placed on the bier. After this, the Mollah reads the 67th chapter of the Alcoran, called *Moulk*. If the deceased person died in the morning, in the evening they carry the corpse to the burying-ground; if he died in the evening, this is done on the following morning. It is worthy of remark here, that the Russian law, which forbids that a corpse should be interred earlier than three days, is too much neglected among the Tartars.

Over the bodies of deceased women the same number of sheets is placed ; but besides this, their face is covered with a square of linen, about a yard wide ; their hair being previously divided and placed on each side of the neck. From the bosom to the knees, thcir bodies are enveloped in white linen or calico.

The corpse, being placed on the bier, is carried on the shoulders of the mourners from the house, and on passing before the mosque the funeral *cortege* stops, and a short prayer, called *djenaza*, is read, but without any genuflexions.

Whilst the corpse is being buried in the church-yard, the women, who remain at home, read the chapter *Moulk*, give alms to the poor, and wash the house. In the grave is dug a side-niche, in which the corpse, when taken off the bier, is placed on its right side, the face being turned towards Mecca. This niche is called *lekhed*, and is formed out of unbaked bricks, in the shape of an ordinary oven. The *Moulk* is again read, and the grave filled up, after which the Mollah returns home to the house of the deceased, where he receives as a present a horse, a cow, a sheep, or a sum of money. The clothes of the deceased and his Koran become the property of the *Azantcha* (the assistant of the Mollah, or clerk), who is bound to pray to God for the repose of the soul of the departed. On the day of the burial, no food of any kind is partaken of by

the relatives of the deceased. The first three days after the burial are looked upon as days of mourning; on the fourth, the Mollah and all the relations and acquaintances of the deceased are invited to a funeral feast, which is renewed on the seventh day, the fortieth day, and at the end of a year.

At the termination of each of these feasts, the Mollah reads a chapter from the Alcoran.

During the last minutes of a dying person, while the *Soura* is being read, the party who is reading calls the former by name, and the latter, if he is able, answers by pronouncing in Arabic the words, "There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet!" This is continued till the sick man expires. When a woman dies, all the duties are performed by her sex; even the husband is not allowed to look on his wife after her decease; but when the corpse is washed, and wrapped up in the way before mentioned, and when the Mollah comes to say the funeral prayers, the women then leave the corpse, and the men place it on the bier and carry it to the cemetery.

The prayers for the dead and almsgiving last for six weeks. If the deceased chance to be a rich man, the Mollah goes several times a day to his grave, and reads the chapter of the Alcoran assigned for that purpose.

Dr. Fouks says, that it must be acknowledged that the Tartars surpass the Russians in their sup-

port of the poor, though he supposes this to arise, not so much from an impulse of the heart as from the dread they have of not fulfilling the laws of their severe Prophet, who says "that what is given to the poor upon earth will be returned to the giver in heaven; what he feeds them with and gives them to drink, that same will he eat and drink in paradise; what garments he clothes them with, in the same garments will he be clad in the world to come."

Dr. Fouks relates likewise, that one of his Tartar neighbours in the country, Sharifa Banou, may serve as an example of the strict manner in which the laws of the Prophet are kept. "There is no doubt," he says, "that her charity came straight from the heart, because her mildness and benevolence astonished all who knew her. She had a small independence, and, being a widow, could dispose of it as she liked: she lived solely and wholly for the poor, and not a crust of bread did she eat but was shared with them. This is how she passed her days. On getting up in the morning, she read her prayers, and then invited several poor Tartars to drink tea with her; first serving them, and then herself. After this, she sat to work, to make some articles of dress for the indigent. To dinner the poor were again invited; and they partook of the same food as was prepared for herself, and sat at the same table. It sometimes happened that there

came a greater number of poor than she expected ; in that case she gave them her own portion of the food, and contented herself with a slice of bread and salt.

“ She never wore rich dresses, but used such as she was in the habit of making for the poor girls whose marriage she superintended. In this way she lived from the age of twenty-two, when she became a widow, to thirty-seven, when she died. Her body was followed to the grave by a host of poor persons, who each of them received some gift on the occasion.”

But to return to our subject. We forgot to mention, that previous to filling up the grave, each of the mourners takes a handful of clay and flings it on the deceased. The Mollah, while this is doing, repeats aloud the following :—“ Allah is our Lord ; Islam our religion ; the Koran our law ; Mahomet our prophet, on whom be the blessing of the Most High !”

Occasionally, the nearest relation of the defunct leaps upon the grave exclaiming, “ He died a Mussulman !”

I have been assured, though I cannot assert it as a fact, that three days after the death of a Tartar, no fire is allowed to be lit in the house wherein he died. We have before said that prayers are offered up for the deceased during several weeks after the burial. Koupfer, the Academician, tells us that,

during one of his strolls in a Tartar cemetery, he met one day with an old man praying on the tomb of his mother, who had been dead and buried forty-five years.

The Tartars have a great respect for the tombs of their ancestors and relations. Their cemetery is situated near the Kaban lake. The tombs are built generally in the form of a small house, sometimes of wood, sometimes of brick; a few birch-trees are planted around. The grave-stones are placed erect, and are in the shape of a pillar, or of a cubic form. The inscriptions are in the Arabic language: we subjoin one or two for the inspection of the reader.

1.

“In the name of God Almighty! This consecrated tomb belongs to *Mukhammed-Rakhim*, the son of *Said*, a jeweller, who quitted this mortal world for an immortal world in the year 1241. May the blessings of God be abundantly upon him!”

2.

“Power belongs to the Lord: he is eternal and immortal! In the year 1252 (of the Hegira), on the 17th day of Zioul-Hidgee, *Dámoulla Abdoulnassir Akhount*, and *Mouderiss*, the son of the Mollah *Rakman Koulla*, changed this mortal world for an immortal world. May God consecrate their tomb! We belong to God, and return to Him.”

3.

“In death there is much instruction. According to the Arabic calendar, in the year 1251, on the 28th day

in the month of the holy Ramazan, the wife (no name !) of *Achmet Mikhriban*, the daughter of *Moussa*, in the fiftieth year of her age left this mortal world for an immortal world. May God consecrate her tomb ! May He render her ashes sacred !”

## 4.

“ He (God) is eternal and immortal ! All that lives must die. All that lives in the air, or the water, and on the earth is mortal : God alone is immortal. The Prophet (may the blessing of God be upon him !) says, ‘ In death there is much instruction.’ Here lies, etc.”

These four inscriptions will suffice ; they will serve as a specimen of all the rest in the Tartar cemetery of Kazan.

There exist in Kazan two very old tombstones, bearing inscriptions made before the taking of that city by the Russians. These are too curious to be passed over in silence ; we translate one of them, therefore, for the benefit of all lovers of antiquity.

“ He (God) is eternal and immortal ! God Almighty said : ‘ Every created being on the earth and in the air is mortal ; but the Lord is immortal !’ God Almighty said again : ‘ All that lives must die.’ In the year nine hundred and thirty-six of the Hegira (A.D. 1530), in the month Zioulkaada (July), *Koul Moukhammed*, the son of *Schig Moukhammed*, departed from this mortal world to an immortal world. May the plentiful mercy of God be upon him ! He was killed by the hand of the infidel. We belong to God, and return to Him.”

Near Ouffa, on the banks of the river Diouma,

stands an ancient sepulchral stone, very much revered by the Tartars, on which is engraved the following epitaph :—

“ Goss Goussian Bey, a judge full of equity and well informed in all the laws, here lies buried.

“ We beseech Thee, O Lord, to have pity upon him and pardon his sins.

“ He died in the year 774 (of the Hegira), in the 7th night of the sacred month.

“ He planned and projected—he wished to execute ; but Death opposes the vain projects of man.

“ No one on earth can escape Death. Stranger or friend ! when thou shalt pass this tomb think of thy last end.”

This simple, but at the same time dignified inscription does honour to the ancient Tartars.

## XI.

The Tartars of Kazan are far more advanced in the ways of civilization than might at first be imagined by the reader.

They have four schools in Kazan, to which almost every male Tartar child is sent, in order that he may at least learn to read and write, and become acquainted with the principles of their faith. The Mollah is generally the principal teacher, and is called *Khalfa* ; in Arabic, *Stott*. He does not live in the school, but has his assistants, chosen from among the scholars, who have their abode in the establishment ; he receives no pay for this duty,

but expects presents from his pupils : these consist of flour, honey, tea, sometimes a small present of copper money, and occasionally even the robe called *khalat*.

The children, as we before said, begin their course of instruction at about five years of age, and continue to study till they are ten or twelve years old. What their studies consist of we have stated in a preceding page.

The school-room consists of a large apartment, in which the pupils learn, eat and drink, sleep, and even in cases of trifling sickness, lie till they recover. Each pupil for this purpose has a large trunk, in which he puts his books, etc., and on this he places his bedding, which consists of a large cushion, a rug, and a coverlet or counterpane. In cases of sickness, the teacher acts as doctor, and gives his patient those simple remedies most commonly used. The teachers sleep in the same room as the pupils, but their corners are distinguished by being separated by means of a curtain. The teachers, likewise, very often work at some handicraft in their leisure hours,—make and mend shoes, clothes, etc.

Children begin to learn at the dawn of day ; at that time the Mollah gives the pupils instruction in religion. On Thursday, a repetition of what has been taught during the past week takes place :

those who answer badly are whipped or confined in a cellar. The teachers are bound to keep their pupils in habits of cleanliness, as well as in the due accomplishment of their various duties; any irregularity in these respects, or the omission of praying to God five times a day, is severely punished. No daily period of recreation is given to the pupils; it is only on a Thursday that they enjoy a rest from study; on that day their occupations cease at noon.

For writing they use the quill of the turkey-cock; their ink is made from Indian-ink, which they rub and dilute when required; and they use paper having a very glossy surface. They learn, squatted on their cushions, in the Asiatic fashion; and repeat their lessons in a whining dismal tone of voice, very disagreeable to listen to. The scene which a Tartar school-room presents at the time of study is a very singular one. As they remain the entire week in school, they draw lots among themselves to know who shall prepare their daily food, for I need not say that no woman is allowed to come near them. Their food is cooked in a large cauldron, and each pupil is at liberty to eat his portion when he likes; generally however they breakfast together at eight in the morning, and dine at six in the evening.

The Tartars of Kazan have their own printing establishment, which was founded in the year 1802. In this establishment all the workmen are Tartars;

their ink however and printing-paper is bought from the Russians.

The following works were printed in this printing-house, during the course of the first three years of its existence :—

1. A Tartar Elementary Reading-book: 11,000 copies.
2. The Koran (abridged) : 7000 copies.
3. The book called 'Pirgouly:' 1200 copies.
4. The book called 'Faoudjoul Nadjiad:' 3000 copies.
5. The book called 'Soubbatoul Gazeezin:' 3000 copies.
6. The book called 'Stouani:' 3000 copies.
7. The Koran (complete) : 2000 copies.
8. The Koran, in thirty parts (called *Gavtiack*) : 1000 copies.

It will be seen from this brief sketch that the Tartars of Kazan are gradually emerging from the state of ignorance in which they so long remained buried. It is to be regretted however that greater attempts are not made to convert this portion of the Mussulman race to Christianity.

The Tartars have their poetry, though it is scarcely worthy to bear this name. It consists of songs, which they call *takmiack*, which have no logical form, and very often little or no meaning. Occupied principally with trade, the Tartars pay little attention to the Muses. The following will serve as specimens of these productions, which are sung by the Tartars,—adapted to ancient airs, as unin-

telligible to the European ear, as the words they accompany.

*Tartar Songs.*

1.

“ Dear soul of mine ! (the poet addresses a fair girl.) What shall I give you as a present ? I have no treasures brought from Bucharia to offer you. But for love of thee—for love of thee, I am dying. I can bear no more ; *I cannot stand on my legs !*” (Poor poet !)

2.

“ In the groves of Bucharia and Khiva the apple-tree grows alone ; when will the living God unite my lot to yours ?”

3.

“ Light of my eyes ; I have built for thee a vast palace with gilt staircases (query, was it not a castle in the air ?). When will you come and inhabit it with me ?”

4.

“ The banks of the Volga are covered with rushes, but they cannot defend the river from the frost. Alas ! leaning on the balustrade of my home, I pine in solitude and sorrow for the maiden I love.”

5.

“ As the Volga is vast, as Joseph loved Zoulaika, so do I love thee—my soul, my treasure !”

6.

“ I fear not my enemy nor his threats, but I fear thy anger ; I fear to offend thee, thou best corner of my heart !”

## 7.

"I asked the Mollah, 'Is there a cure for hidden sickness?' He looked at me and said, 'What is the matter with you? you are in a fever, you rave.' I opened my heart to him, I said, '*Alas! I am in love!*'"

This I think will suffice for the reader; indeed, I believe I could not finish with a more touching and delightful effusion.

## XII.

I shall conclude this chapter with a few general observations concerning this race.

It has been remarked, that the Tartar population of Kazan has considerably diminished within the last forty years. This is partly owing to the habit the Tartars have lately acquired of drinking strong spirits, and partly to the custom established of choosing for their wives very young girls, twelve and thirteen years of age. Dr. Fouks remarks, that such wives have always pale and sickly faces, and either do not bear at all, or give birth to delicate and short-lived children.

The Tartars have ever been renowned for the vice of thieving, they are so likewise at the present day; nowhere are so many instances of theft to be met with as among this race. Murder is a crime likewise of no rare occurrence: what contributes much to the commission of this crime is the circumstance that, according to their laws, to

kill a Christian is not looked upon as a very great sin.

The greatest part of the Tartars of Kazan devote their time to commerce : many of their merchants are very rich, and still bear the title of Princes, or *Mourzas*, which they derived from their ancestors celebrated during the dominion of the Khans. Among these may be mentioned Princes Zama-noff, Apanaieff, Yakousheff, Younouseff, Ousmanoff, etc. (N.B. The termination *off* and *eff* have been added since the conquest of Kazan.)

They live at the present day in tolerable harmony with the Russians, and the latter do not as often as before bestow on them the injurious epithets with which they were wont to greet them some few years back. Occasionally however a Russian coachman driving through the streets, still reviles the Tartar he may chance to meet, calling him *Sabaka* (dog) if he does not quickly get out of his way and let him pass. The Tartar thus saluted answers *Dongouss!* and mutters between his teeth the word *Alkafir!*

Much as the Tartars are brought in contact with the Russians, you will meet with few who can speak the Russ with freedom, and still fewer who can read and write in that tongue. They make no endeavour to learn it, and content themselves with a certain mutilated jargon which they acquire by habit.

The Tartars look upon Christians as unclean, because they have images in their churches, and eat the flesh of swine.

Not being allowed to enter the Christian churches, they imagine that divine service consists in the ringing of bells and the adoration of images.

At the present day they count the years and months according to the Christian calendar.

They have a singular cosmetic, in the shape of a small stick, called *mesvait agatch*, with which they rub their teeth and gums, to sweeten their breath, when they enter the mosque.

Many of the Tartars have got so far over their national and religious prejudices as to frequent the Russian places of amusement, such as theatres, masquerades, etc. etc.

Though the women are not allowed to assist at public amusements, still they often come to the popular festivities which take place at Kazan in the spring, and observe with great interest the swings and merry-shows which form a part of these meetings. They remain however at a distance, in their kibitkas, their heads covered with shawls, etc.

The lower class of Tartars resemble John Bull in one respect, namely, that they are particularly fond of boxing. During the spring and autumn, in fine weather, about dusk, they assemble on the banks of the Kaban, and enjoy this favourite pastime.

In former years, they were wont to challenge their Russian neighbours to a trial in this gymnastical science : in such a case, the fray seldom ended without bloodshed. It is agreeable to relate that these encounters seldom or never take place at the present day.

Dr. Fouks says that the Tartars suffer less from disease than the Russians : this is partly owing to the regular life they lead. They suffer more than the latter however from affections of the liver and the lower regions of the stomach. Many fall a prey to the cholera. They are likewise greatly subject to diarrhoea, which becomes very dangerous in warm weather, and carries them off in great numbers. The Doctor says that they take medicines very willingly. As they have no doctors of their own, they address themselves to the Russian or foreign medical men of the town, but remunerate them very indifferently or scarcely at all.

They are very hospitable to strangers ; when they meet them, they shake them by the hand, saying, "*Assölahm haleikum,*" or "Peace be with you." They never take off their hats.

The richer Tartars are sometimes invited to public dinners or parties given in private houses, particularly when foreigners visit Kazan and are anxious to see some members of the race we speak of. The Mollah is generally invited on such occasions. They accept with pleasure the proffered invitation ; but,

at table, only partake of those dishes made of fish, rice, or milk, never touching the meat. Wine they seldom or never drink at such parties, but partake of hydromel and sherbet.

They sometimes invite the Russians to their own houses, but are oftener obliged to do so, when they are requested to give a party by the Governor of the town or by some of the principal functionaries. This is almost always the case when any eminent traveller visits Kazan.

The Tartars have a great veneration for old-age. It is always their elders who perform the duties of Mollahs, and of judges; the family prayers are recited by them. They are ever called upon to examine quarrels and settle disputes. *Aksack*, or "Grey-beard," is one of the most friendly and respectful terms they can use.

The Tartars consider themselves sullied when they have touched a corpse, or eaten of any impure animal. In such a case they are obliged to purify themselves by the use of the bath, and by prayer.

We have before stated that the Tartars are allowed to have four wives in the same town they inhabit, as well as one in every other town where they have a place of residence. They seem however by degrees to have become aware of the fact, that to bear patiently one irremediable evil is better than adding some score to the burden. Many therefore at the present day content themselves with one

wife. They have found out that the turmoil, the inconvenience and expense attendant on polygamy more than counterbalance the joys that exist in variety—that their life passes quieter and more pleasantly—that grey hairs show themselves later; so that, by dint of a long experience, they have managed to grow a little wiser than their forefathers. For this lesson, at least, the followers of Mahomet are indebted to the disciples of Christianity.

From statistics on the subject, we learn that at the present day, in the town of Kazan, only fifty-five Tartars have two wives; only six, three wives; and only two, four wives. We congratulate the Tartars on the good sense they have exhibited in this reform, in which it is to be wished their Mahometan brethren in other countries would imitate them.

Such are the principal characteristic marks of the Tartar inhabitants of Kazan. But ere I leave this race to turn to other subjects, I think it will be interesting to my readers to read an account of a visit I made, during my sojourn in Kazan, to the house of a rich Tartar merchant, which gave me an opportunity, not only of partaking of a true Tartar repast, but even procured me an opportunity of entering the apartments of the women, a privilege so seldom accorded to the male portion of our human kind.

## XIII.

It was at a dinner given by General Strekaloff, Governor of Kazan, that this opportunity presented itself to me. The dinner had been given in honour of two English ladies, who had quitted their country for the purpose of travelling through the whole of Russia, and, with this view, had made a short stay in Kazan. The General, out of compliment to his guests, had ordered a dinner as like an English one as his Russian cook could manage to make it. I cannot say however that the accomplishment of the General's wish was equal to the politeness of the compliment. The soup was a kind of mock-turtle, yet indeed was a mockery of the name ; the roast beef (which, by the bye, was baked) was the best, it is true, I had ever tasted in Kazan, though this is not saying much in its favour ; what was served up as a plum-pudding bore not a shadow of resemblance to that most noble of dishes ; but, to make amends, we had one of the finest *sterlets* I ever partook of in this country. It was more than a yard long. This fish is said to exist nowhere save in Russia : it is caught in the Caspian Sea and the River Volga, and is considered, and justly too, a very great luxury. In Kazan a fish of the size I have just spoken of costs about £5, but, in St. Petersburg, it would be at least £15. This fish, with some excellent "double brown stout"

and good wine, was the *summum bonum* of this dinner, to which the greatest part of those who spoke English had been invited. The topic of conversation turned upon Kazan and its inhabitants, until, in their turn, the Tartars became the subject of discourse. "Have you seen the Tartar mosques, or heard the Mahometan mode of prayer, Madam?" said the General, turning to one of our fair countrywomen. "No," answered the latter, "but I have a very great desire to do so; unfortunately however I am told their religion forbids the admission of females into the mosques, and that they strictly observe this principle." "In Constanti-nople, Madam," returned the General, "you might probably have some difficulty in entering at the period of their service, but here we shall be able to remove the difficulty, and I shall take care to arrange matters so as to allow your visiting the principal mosque next Friday (the Sunday of the Tartars) at the period of their prayers. Likewise, as it may be interesting for you to observe in what way the richer class of Tartars live I will obtain an invitation from one of the merchants to visit his house, and inspect whatever may interest you." Our countrywomen expressed their "hanks, and the assembled party volunteered unanimously to escort these ladies to the proposed place of visit on the ensuing Friday.

We formed a glorious cavalcade of *vazoks* and

sledges, when we set out for the Tartar Town on the day mentioned. Our party might have consisted of about thirty persons, half of whom were ladies. We were not long in arriving at the place of our destination. As we swept through the streets, the Tartars viewed us with curiosity and astonishment, lost in conjecture as to what could have brought such a train of equipages into their rarely frequented suburbs. On reaching the mosque (the same we have already described), our ears were greeted with the cry of the Muezzin, who, from the summit of this tower, was engaged in calling the faithful to prayer. When we entered the mosque, which was already filled, all eyes were immediately turned upon us. The Tartars were not a little astonished on seeing so many females thronging into their place of worship. Many of the old ones frowned, and seemed angry at the intrusion : but the younger portion of the congregation appeared by no means dissatisfied with the opportunity of gazing on pretty faces, even in a spot where woman's foot is forbidden to tread. What is very singular is, that even the Mollah, or priest, was so far influenced in favour of his female visitors that he caused chairs to be brought for their accommodation, a thing hitherto almost unheard of. The congregation presented the most remarkable appearance. The peculiar character of their faces the variety of their turbans, white, red, or yellow ; the remarkable appearance of their rich

and many-coloured dresses, formed a really interesting sight. According to their custom, their faces were all turned towards the east; and when the service began they seemed profoundly attentive. It commenced with a kind of chant, performed by the Mollah, and succeeded by a portion of the Koran, which the latter half read, half sang. At the conclusion of the ceremony we quitted the mosque, and, re-entering our respective equipages, drove towards the house of the hospitable Tartar, who was awaiting our arrival.

The name of this merchant was Apakoff, reputed to be a man of great fortune. He was an old man with a white beard and an agreeable countenance, and seemed more courteous and civilized than the generality of his Tartar brethren. He received us with a warm and enthusiastic welcome; joy was depicted on his countenance. That the family of the Governor-General, accompanied by some of the principal persons of the town, should visit his abode, was to him a compliment of no little importance. On our entering the house, we were surrounded by a multitude of Tartar servants, who assisted us in taking off our shoobs and galoshes, and who, seemingly, not much accustomed to this kind of service, performed it in a way peculiar to themselves. One young lady who had some difficulty in taking off her warm boots, which were laced to her foot, was observed by a young Tartar

making useless efforts, with fingers half-frozen from the cold, to disengage the cord, and I could not but smile to see this youth spring forward, and, seizing with one hand the ankle of the young lady (so suddenly and unexpectedly that she nearly lost her equilibrium) he disengaged, in the twinkling of an eye, the boot from her foot. This was done before the lady had even time to consider what was his intention in seizing so rudely her ankle, and she scarcely knew whether to smile or to frown as she looked at her expert yet rough cavalier. After easing ourselves of our winter clothing, we entered the apartments of our host, where our eyes were greeted with the sight of several tables loaded with various articles of food, such as cakes, biscuits, sweetmeats, and preserved fruits, all prepared according to the Tartar method. These cakes and biscuits were in all shapes and fashions that the imagination could devise : I would willingly give the reader some idea of their form and nature, but I own I am unequal to the task, and I can conceive nothing more difficult to be described than the contents of a confectioner's shop,—at least, to all save the confectioner himself. All that I can do, is to give some of the names of these singular articles. Be it known, then, to all and every one whom it may concern, that there was *soumsa*, and *beeramasche*, and *schalpack*, and *bowersack*, and *kouschteli*, and *leevashee*, and *laksha*, and *goul-*

*manak*, etc. Another table was loaded with Tartar confectionery, in general of the lollipop genus, and by no means inviting either to the sight or taste. The most remarkable of these *bonbons* was a species of sweetmeat much prized among the Tartars, called *klarwarsarkar*,—a pretty name ! and a composition of honey and flour, moulded into the shape of horses, guitars, houses, hearts, etc. Such were the various curious *bonnes bouches* which awaited our taste and approbation.

The first thing we partook of was tea, which was handed round to each in large cups and tumblers ; and such tea ! I never in my life tasted such a delicious beverage. A fragrance exhaled itself from the cups so strong that it almost perfumed the room. There is no country where tea exists in such perfection as in Russia, and it is among the Russian merchants and the rich Tartars that you must seek for the very best of this article,—that is, unless you yourself are sufficiently an amateur of this beverage to pay seventy and even eighty shillings a pound for the enjoyment. This, with a peculiar kind of rusk, was first presented to us, and it was well chosen, for the cold had stolen a great portion of animal heat from our bodies, and this completely revived and restored it.

Our party now commenced operations on the cakes and biscuits, which, one after the other, curiosity induced us to taste ; we quitted these for

the sweetmeats, which the Tartars call *pissit*, and finally adjourned to the fruits and nuts. While busily engaged in speculating on the nature of these various articles, our host invited us to partake of a Tartar dinner, which was arranged in an adjoining apartment, and thither we retired. A Tartar soup was now presented to us; this was called *shirba*, and in it floated a variety of the small patties I have spoken of, called *yelmancy*. What this was made of it would have been a very difficult matter to have ascertained; for my own part, I had my suspicions that it was a decoction of horseflesh, the favourite food of the Tartars. I concealed my suspicions however from the rest of the company, who, like myself, tasted, but did no more. This was succeeded by a dish of *ploff*, composed of boiled fowls and other articles, buried in rice and butter; in favour of this I dare not likewise say too much. There were many other dishes placed on the table, some of boiled and others of roast meat; among these probably might have been that celebrated food of the Tartars, horseflesh, but, singularly enough, I forgot the existence of this dainty at the moment, and it is by no means unlikely that I ate a portion of some worn-out jade (for I believe I tasted almost everything that was presented), without knowing that I was partaking of such a luxurious rarity.

I forgot to mention that wine and liquors were

placed on a side-table for those who were desirous of partaking of them, and at a certain period of our singular meal champagne was presented to the company. I was not a little astonished to see our hospitable host, all Mussulman as he was, take in his hand a glass of this prohibited beverage, and proposing, as a compliment to our English travellers the health and happiness of the Queen of England, quaff at one draught its contents. I had the honour of returning the compliment by drinking to the health of the Emperor Nicholas.

Our host, though his beard was white and his years not few, could nevertheless boast of possessing four wives, and had a large family, consisting of two sons and several daughters, some of whom, I had heard, were distinguished for their beauty ; to these was allotted a distinct portion of the house, which formed the harem of our entertainer. The ladies now solicited permission to visit the abode of the females ; it was accorded, but upon condition that they should proceed thither unaccompanied by any male member of the society. This was a blow to my hopes of seeing the interior of a Tartar harem ; but I began a siege on the politeness of the old man, representing that I was a stranger, and a traveller, to whom such a scene would be of great interest ; and the latter, after withholding the attack for a long time, at length consented. He bade me, therefore, follow him. I did so, and after passing

through one or two rooms, he opened a door and told me to enter. I shall never forget the scream—the unanimous cry from some twenty voices—which burst upon my ear when I entered that room. The women, to whom the sight of any other man save their husband was of rare occurrence, were horrified on seeing a stranger enter their very place of habitation. They fled, as I approached, to all parts of the apartment, hiding their faces under the thick embroidered shawls which covered their heads. My lady friends endeavoured to restore them to a little confidence, by assuring them it was with the permission of their lord and master that I came to pay them my respects ; notwithstanding, it was a long time before they left the corners and niches into which they had buried themselves ; and when they came forward it was in a troop, huddled together, and each endeavouring to hide herself under the clothes of the other, much in the way of a flock of sheep, when a wolf or a watch-dog is near. Their dresses were rich beyond description, being almost one mass of embroidery in gold or silver. The faces of several were pretty, but so thickly covered with rouge and white paint that no trace of their real complexion could be discovered. The apartment in which they lived was furnished with divans and sofas, without either tables or chairs, it being their custom to have their meals spread upon the ground.

Being unwilling to prolong the torture of the host more than was absolutely necessary, I made my visit to the apartment of his wives as brief as possible, and returned to the company.

On entering, I was assailed with a thousand questions concerning what I had seen. I naturally took care to excite the curiosity of my less fortunate male companions, by the account I gave of the marvels and charms of a Tartar harem; which rendered them, by the bye, doubly jealous of the privilege which had been so exclusively granted to me. After an hour or two more spent in the house of the hospitable old man to whom we were indebted for the entertainment, we took our farewell of him at the door of his abode, in the midst of a numerous throng of Tartars, who had congregated to see us, and, seating ourselves in our sledges, we left the Tartar Suburbs and returned to the "Russian Town."

## CHAPTER II.

### FASTS AND FESTIVALS OF THE TARTARS.

- I. AN INVITATION TO THE SABAN.—II. TARTAR WRESTLERS.—  
 III. TARTAR HORSE-RACING.—IV. SOBER ASPECT OF THE SABAN.—  
 —V. TERMINATION OF THE FETE.—VI. TARTAR FETE CALLED  
 DJINN.—VII. THE FAST CALLED RAMAZAN.—VIII. THE FETE  
 CALLED KOURBAN.

#### I.

DURING my sojourn in Kazan, one morning, about the beginning of the month of May, I chanced to meet a Tartar on horseback, who, with a long stick in his hand, at the end of which was attached a coloured cotton pocket-handkerchief, was actively engaged in endeavouring to attract attention by shaking the banner he carried in every direction, bawling out as he rode along, “*Saban! Saban!*” Somewhat surprised at the gestures and cries of the horseman, I inquired what they signified, and was informed that it was a public invitation, which this herald was carrying from the Tartars to the Russian inhabitants of Kazan, requesting the latter to assist at one of their national *fêtes*, called

“Saban.” Delighted with the favourable opportunity thus offered of witnessing the games and popular amusements of this people, on the following day at noon I drove towards the Tartar Town, and from thence to the spot appointed for the festivity, situated about a verst from the Tartar Suburbs, in the midst of a vast meadow, surrounded on every side by hills and forests.

On my arrival, I found that a vast crowd had already assembled. What particularly struck me at first was the total absence of womankind, Mahometan and Christian. Even the Russian women appeared to have imitated on this occasion their Tartar neighbours, whose religion does not permit them to assist openly in any popular festivity. However, I soon discovered that the latter were not totally absent from the scene, though they took no active part in it, for on sauntering about I perceived in the outskirts of the forest, sheltered and concealed by the foliage, a vast number of *kabitkas* (common Russian vehicles), in which were seated a multitude of Tartar beauties, clad in their gayest attire, and viewing attentively from afar the progress of the festivities. As I passed along, I stopped for a few moments to gaze at these imprisoned spouses, many of whom had removed their veils, for the weather was extremely hot, and I was astonished to find that several made no attempt to escape my gaze; indeed I afterwards ascertained

that the Tartar women make less scruple in showing their faces to Christians, though they are strictly forbidden to allow a Mahometan eye to contemplate their charms. A great many of these female beauties were engaged, as usual, in drinking tea, and a host of samovars might be seen boiling and smoking around them. Finding that my presence seemed so little to disturb or annoy the fair Tartar throng, into which I had penetrated quite unexpectedly, I did not feel at all disposed to retire precipitately from the spot,—the more so, as I soon ascertained that I was the only male being at the moment among them ; so summoning up all the assurance I could muster, I calmly took my seat near a group of these ladies, who were sipping their tea, squatted on the grass, and, taking my album from my pocket, I began to sketch their attractive forms and fair faces. Whether the deliberate calmness of my manner acted favourably upon them, or whether they were disposed to be more amiable in the woods than they would have been in their streets or houses, I cannot say ; but certain it is, that, instead of evincing any signs of discontent or disapprobation, they all burst out laughing, while they continued to gaze attentively upon me, and shortly after went so far as to send me a cup of the favourite beverage of which they were partaking. Oh, how I regretted at that moment my ignorance of the Tartar language ! All that I could do there-

fore was to look, sketch, and drink tea ; and to be able to do this, by the bye, was no trifling good fortune. When I had finished my sketch I passed it to the ladies, who were, as may be imagined, highly amused at seeing themselves represented in the posture, and at the occupation, at which I had surprised them. Unwilling to put their complaisance too much to the stretch, I rose and retired, and almost a minute after, the loud cries, which were heard on the plain, informed me that the games had commenced. On arriving once more in the midst of the crowd, with great difficulty I worked my way through it, till I reached a ring formed by a cord, which had been drawn round the spot destined for feats of wrestling,—one of the greatest amusements of the Tartar people. It is with this gymnastic exercise that the *fête* of the Saban is always opened ; and this pastime is renewed several times during the eight days the festival lasts.

## II.

Two robust young fellows, lightly clad, stood face to face. After surveying each other a moment, they tie their bodies together with their sashes in such a manner as only to hold the ends of each in their hands. Then the struggle commences, each trying to overthrow his adversary. What efforts are made ! how each watches for the least sign of weakness in his antagonist ! But their strength is

about equal. Every gesture is foreseen ; for some moments you would imagine these two bodies formed but one, so uniform are the movements of the wrestlers. A profound silence reigns amongst the spectators. Suddenly a loud hurrah is heard : the victory is decided ; but the two wrestlers have fallen, the band that unites them not allowing one to fall alone. The vanquished is obliged to drag his antagonist with him in his downfall, and he who is thrown upon the body of his adversary is proclaimed victor. Then, in the midst of the acclamations of the multitude, he receives the prize : and what a prize !—twenty, and sometimes only ten kopecks (one penny) ! Really these games must have a great attraction for the Tartars, for it appears almost incredible that they would take part in them for the mere hope of gaining a few kopecks. Sometimes the murmurs and complaints of the vanquished occasion quarrels, which are decided by umpires, who walk sedately up and down the space reserved for the games. As a mark of their dignity they carry in their hand a large can, which they make use of occasionally to terminate the disputes, without showing much mercy to him who appears to be in the wrong. It is also the office of these judges to procure sufficient wrestlers for the festival, the reward not being great enough to attract a considerable number of combatants. Many of the more expert wrestlers require to be paid a

certain sum in advance, besides the prize they may gain. In order to procure this money, a kind of subscription is made amongst the rich Tartar merchants of the town. I saw one wrestler appear four or five times in the arena, and each time he was victorious. The whole amount of his victories, I thought, could not have been more than a rouble (tenpence), and I pitied him sincerely for having fatigued himself so much for such a trifle. My compassion however was greatly diminished when I learned that the profits of the day amounted to upwards of a hundred roubles, and that this man, who followed no other trade, had amassed a little fortune by his superiority in wrestling. I must also mention, that the wealthy Tartars make presents to the more expert wrestlers; and this is not one of the least advantages of the profession.

### III.

At the other extremity of the meadow where the festival was held, there was a kind of horse-race, and at the end of the course a pole was placed, on the top of which floated a large coloured handkerchief. This was to be the winner's prize. The horses ran as quickly as could be expected, and were mounted by boys, who, although very young, manage them extremely well. Notwithstanding the want of elegance, and savage character of these races, I could not avoid on this occasion recalling

to mind those of Ascot and Newmarket. I mentally compared the brilliant throng of my own countrymen and countrywomen with the present, where I was pushed and jolted at every moment by barbarous-looking Tartars. The comparison was also striking between the small miserable Tartar horses and the noble English coursers, who own no rivals but among the Arab steeds. And yet this rude and uncivilized crowd had come to witness the same amusement which Englishmen seek at Newmarket and Ascot ; the winner was received with the same shouts and acclamations, and no doubt was as well pleased with the miserable coloured handkerchief which he received as his prize, as any jockey at Newmarket could be when he gains some thousand guineas.

#### IV.

Many other feats were executed by the Tartars during this festival ; all consisting in bodily exercises resembling those in vogue among the inmates of our European colleges. In all these various games, the most skilful, active, and strongest played the best part ; the unskilled and awkward received nothing but hisses and cuffs for their pains and endeavours.

As I strolled along in the midst of this joyous throng, I was much astonished at not seeing a single drunken man, a sight so common at the public festi-

vals of civilized nations. Although the use of wine is strictly forbidden by the Koran, I was well aware that the Tartars of Kazan made no scruple in violating this positive law of their religion, and could not in consequence at first explain this uncommon appearance of sobriety and temperance. I learnt that the most distinguished of the Tartars of Kazan, who are anxious that this precept of the Koran should be observed at least publicly, have obtained from the Russian authorities the permission to forbid any wine and spirits being brought to this feast,—a circumstance which doubtless prevents many a scene of scandal and indecorum which would otherwise be observed, and gives to the festival that striking air of temperance I have spoken of.

## V.

At the setting of the sun, it is a beautiful and imposing sight to behold the vast crowd which this *fête* draws together, suspending on a sudden its amusements, in order to offer up the evening prayer to the Almighty. • The Mollahs recite it aloud, and the various prostrations, attitudes, and movements prescribed by the Mahometan law, are executed in the open air with the same solemnity and fervour as in the mosque. A most solemn silence reigns at this moment in every part of the throng, which a minute before was so gay and noisy. It is in this way that the Saban finishes ; and is it not a grand

and noble feeling which prompts them to end a day of pleasure and rejoicing with a public prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude? In this respect how superior are this semi-barbarous race to many civilized nations, that seldom think, after a day of happiness, of rendering thanks to the Great Dispenser of all joy, of every blessing! Thanks to the Tartars of Kazan for the lesson they give us!

The Tartar word *saban* signifies plough, and the feast of the *Saban* was probably instituted to celebrate the benefits which this instrument of labour annually produces during the spring.

In the Tartar villages this feast takes place the moment the snow has entirely disappeared from the surface of the fields. In Kazan it is celebrated a little later, for the spot chosen for the ceremony is generally covered at the commencement of the spring by the inundation of the Volga.

The feast begins on a Friday, and ends on the Friday following.

## VI.

There are several other national *fêtes* kept by the Tartars, in a more or less religious manner: such are the *Djinn*, the *Ramazan*, and the *Kourban*. We will make a short mention in this section of the first.

Like the *Saban*, the *Djinn* is a national feast, and is principally celebrated in the villages on every

Friday, for seven weeks, counting from the 8th of June.

This feast is as specially destined for the women, as the Saban is for the men. Tradition attributes its origin to the following circumstance.

A rich Tartar had a large family of daughters, and found no means of getting them married (a thing, by the bye, which happens sometimes they say, also in Christian countries).

This Tartar, whose daughters, according to the law of the Koran, had never been seen by man, save himself and family, resolved to break this injunction, in hopes of getting his daughters married and settled.

Convinced of their beauty, and having taken care to make known that he required a very small kalym, he resorted to the following expedient. On a certain Friday (the Sabbath of the Tartars), he invited all the rich and notable inhabitants of the neighbouring villages to a grand feast, at which, in the very teeth of the Koran, his daughters assisted, unveiled, and in all their charms. The plan succeeded; and in a very short space of time all his daughters got married, and well married to boot.

This expedient for getting rid of their daughters seemed so convenient, and was in fact so tempting to Tartar parents, that once a year, from that period, they made no scruple in setting the Koran

and its laws at defiance for the benefit of their daughters.

Custom has since then become law ; and up to the present day, this *fête* is celebrated.

When it takes place, the young Tartar women, who during the remainder of the year are shut up in their houses, have an opportunity of showing their charms to their youthful Mussulman countrymen who want wives.

It may be imagined how actively and ably every refinement of coquetry is put in practice on this important occasion. The Tartar maidens clothe themselves in their richest attire, cover their cheeks with a thick coating of paint and rouge, blacken carefully their eyebrows, teeth, and eyelids ; in fine, neglect nothing which, according to their notions of the beautiful, can give to their features, as the French poet has it,

“ Cet éclat dont chacune a paré son visage,  
Pour cacher la nature et gâter son ouvrage.”

The *fête* commences with prayers in the mosque. In each family there is spread out a copious repast, and about two o'clock in the afternoon the Tartars and their families assemble in an open plain, whereon a multitude of booths and tents have been previously erected for the sale of refreshments.

The fair Tartar girls on this occasion wander freely about and gaze, and allow themselves to be gazed at without remorse or scruple.

In different parts of the plain, numerous *kou-railchys* (Tartar musicians), playing on violins of their own manufacture, invite the visitors to join in the dance, in which however the men alone are allowed to take part ; the women content themselves with looking at the dancers.

Strange to say, it is not a rare thing to hear these minstrels playing French and German airs ; indeed I have been told that the young modern Tartars find no longer any pleasure in their national dances, and that, on the contrary, the Cossack dance of the Russians pleases them better than any other ; certain it is that they dance it the most frequently of any.

In other parts of the plain, Tartar songs strike the ear : of these we have already spoken. Like all the Oriental songs, they are full of exaggerated and often unintelligible metaphors.

Take this one for instance, and make out its meaning if you can :—

1.

“ As the beautiful moon is bright and clear, so art thou, dear one, soft as the evening star.

2.

“ As the sable’s skin is shiny and lovely, so art thou captivating, like the soft, delicious beaver.

3.

“ Like one deprived of light, I cannot live without thee, fair one !

"A *Djroutchi* (Tartar bard) sang thus to his mistress as I sing to thee :—Beautiful is thy hair as the mane of the steed ; thy body is as lovely as a precious stone ; thy speech is sweet as the song of the nightingale."

The young Tartar girls accompany the *kouraitchys* with their voices ; but dismal and monotonous are their songs, and the effect they produce on the European ear is not only disagreeable but painful.

To give an additional charm to the *fête*, the Tartars ever and anon fire guns and pistols ; this is done moreover to add to the solemnity of the feast.

But these rejoicings last only three or four hours, and before sunset this numerous throng, amounting sometimes to seven or eight thousand persons, disperses, each family going its way.

With regard to the maiden portion of the crowd, some return home full of hope and prospects for the future ; others sad and disappointed, for in the midst of all this noise and merriment, need I say that the eyes have been busily engaged, and the young girl who has made a conquest is pretty well aware of the fact, "for quickly," as Byron says so justly, "comes such knowledge."

On the road, as you travel home, you may hear likewise some young conceited Tartar singing the following song, much in vogue among the Tartar youth of the present day.

"I looked at the fair maiden as a hawk at its prey.

"The fair maiden looked at me as a cat when she is eating butter."

## VII.

The *Ramazan* is the Lent of the Mussulman race. The rigid austerity which the Mahometans have introduced in all their religious duties, has extended to this fast, which is one of the most rigorous and severe possible. It is true, Mahomet ordered his disciples to fast every year during one month, in order to draw down upon them the grace of God ; but he certainly never intended to institute a Lent so severe as the devotion of his followers has rendered this one. During the whole period that the *Ramazan* lasts, every Mussulman is forbidden, from the rising to the setting of the sun, to touch food of any description ; even to drink a little water is considered a crime ; it is only during the night that the Mahometan is permitted to take some slight refreshment, and sufficient in quantity only to keep life and body together. Those who from delicate health cannot, and those who will not comply with this austere duty, are bound, in order to obtain the remission of their sins, to nourish some indigent person for a certain time. It is by the peasants in particular that this fast must be terribly felt, inasmuch as they are forbidden to drink during the day. It will easily be imagined what a cruel privation this must be for the latter, forced as

they are to work in the fields, exposed to the heat of a burning sun during the parching summer of these regions, where heat and cold are in extremes.

Ruring the Ramazan, the Tartars of Kazan visit several times during the day the mosques, where service is performed. Sometimes the Mollah delivers a sermon ; and, on the 27th night of the Ramazan, the mosques are always crowded by both rich and poor.

On that sacred night no Mussulman, man, woman, or child, is allowed to sleep, for they believe that at that time the angels descend upon earth to execute the commands of God. This night, which is called *Al-kard*, is looked upon as the anniversary of the night on which the Koran was given to men.

On the following day, alms are abundantly distributed to the poor. According to the Mahometan laws, every man is bound to devote to pious purposes the tenth part of his fortune. I know not how this injunction is kept by other Mussulman races ; as regards however the Tartars of Kazan, the latter find it more convenient to give only the tenth part of the ready money they possess at the moment. Thus, as they are all either merchants or tradesmen, which causes their capital to be entirely employed in commercial operations, the giving up of the tenth part of what they have in hand is not so burdensome as might be imagined. The Mol-lahs and the Azantchis have the greatest share of

this act of charity ; the poor, who should have had it all, have but a minor part of the offering. This distribution of alms is called *zekatt*.

After public prayers, which last till dinner-time, the Tartars return home and partake of a repast prepared for the occasion, and which is of a nature to compensate for the rigorous fast which they have observed for nearly a month. They then retire to their harems and take a nap. In the evening they go and visit their friends, who prepare for the occasion those good things, in the eating and drinking way, most in vogue among the Tartar race of Kazan.

### VIII.

The *Kourban* is another festival of the Tartars. This is an Arabic word, and signifies the "Feast of Sacrifice." Mahomet instituted it in order that his followers might never forget their duties to God; and, in consequence, he ordained that each Mussulman should sacrifice once a year a victim, in imitation of Abraham, who did not hesitate to offer up his only son.

This *fête* takes place at various periods, owing to the difference between our calendar and that of the Mahometans, which is regulated by the changes of the moon ; and their year being consequently shorter than ours, their months do not occur at the same period as those of the Christian calendar, so

that their festivals are celebrated, sometimes in summer, sometimes in winter.

On the eve of the *fête* we are speaking of, no food is allowed to be touched. Some pious Tartars even go so far as to fast for eleven days at this period, eating only during the night, as is the case during the Ramazan. The ninth day, called *Garrffa*, is the most important and solemn one of this festival. On this day, before sun-rise, the Tartars assemble in the mosque, where public prayers are recited by the Mollah : at the end of each prayer, the Tartars with a loud voice pronounce the *takbir*, a species of short responsive prayer, which we give here in Tartar, with its translation.

“ Allahou akbar ! Allahou akbar ! Li illahou illa illahou ’va Allahou akbar, Allahou akbar ! Va illahoul kamed !”

“ Great God ! Great God ! There is no God but God, and God is great, God is great ; thanks be to God !”

After this, the Mollah reads a sermon, which is the same as that we gave in our description of a Tartar mosque.

Then succeeds a prayer, in verse, in the Arabic language, which the Mollah pronounces in the pulpit, and which is as follows :—

“ Let every one of you repeat with me : ‘ Verily, Verily, my prayers, my devotion, my life, and death, are consecrated to the Lord, the Creator of all creatures, who

has not his equal on earth or in heaven.' This am I ordered to do, and I am the first Mussulman.

"Lord! deign to receive this sacrifice which I offer to thee with a sincere heart; do not reject it, and let it be received, great God, in my behalf as an expiatory offering."

On the termination of this prayer, the Mollah, in the Tartar language, addresses a few words to the congregation, telling each man how he is to immolate and cut up the victim he purposes offering on this occasion; and all then retire to their homes, to perform the sacrifices prescribed by the Mahometan laws. These are as follows:—

Every head of a family is bound to prepare on that day a number of animals proportioned to the number of persons who compose his household, not forgetting the Mollah and the poor. A perfect massacre takes place in some of the richer establishments,—lambs, sheep, oxen, and even camels, sink, on the ninth day of the Kourban, beneath the axe or knife of the Tartars, each of whom is bound to immolate with his own hands at least one victim. The head of the animal is turned towards Mecca while being struck, the sacrificer at the same time pronouncing the word *Allah* (God).

The more superstitious of the Tartars devoutly seize the first drops of blood of the victim, and rub their eyes, nose, and ears with it, convinced that it is an efficacious remedy against the snares of the

Devil. The flesh, or rather a portion of the flesh of the victims, is placed in a huge cauldron, and being boiled without any additional ingredient, is eaten by the family. The poor are not forgotten on this occasion, and a great part of the meat is sent to the Mollah, who distributes it to the indigent.

This *fête*, like the Ramazan, is accompanied with no public rejoicing or festivities ; after the meal is finished, the Tartars visit each other, exchanging mutual good wishes and congratulations.

The feast of the Kourban is held in the twelfth month of the Mahometan calendar, called *Zioul Hadji*.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE TCHOUVASH RACE.

- I. VARIED POPULATION OF KAZAN.—II. ORIGIN OF THE TCHOUVASH.—III. THEIR VILLAGES, HOUSES, AND CHARACTERISTICS.—IV. MODE OF LIVING.—V. THEIR TIMIDITY.—VI. THEIR CREDULOUS NATURE.—VII. RELIGIOUS NOTIONS OF THE TCHOUVASH.—VIII. THE TCHOUVASH WOMEN.—IX. A TCHOUVASH MARRIAGE.—X. FUNERALS AND CEREMONIES.—XI. THE TCHOUVASH DIALECT.

#### I.

AMONG many other original and remarkable features which distinguish the town and province of Kazan, and which render it in this respect so interesting to the intelligent traveller, is that of its being able to boast of six different races which form its population, namely, the Russians, Tartars, Tchouvash, Tcheremisse, Mordvas, and the Votiacks. These races, as may be imagined, not only offer to the observer an immense field for study and observation, as far as national customs, manners, and languages are concerned, but present to his contemplation the three great religious dis-

tinctions which mark the earth,—Christianity, Mahometanism, and Paganism. The first two races, namely, the Russians and the Tartars, we have already described. We will now submit to the notice of our countrymen what we have been able to gather on the subject of the latter tribes, the greatest portion of which are still plunged in the dark errors of Paganism. These remarks, partly the result of our own observation, partly derived from the investigations of some of the learned members of the University of Kazan, who have devoted their time to the study of these tribes, such as they exist at the present day, will be of some value to the reader, when he learns that in no European language, save the Russian, has any detailed account ever yet been given of these races, whose customs and superstitions merit, notwithstanding, such particular attention and interest. We will begin with the Tchouvash tribes, as being the most numerous and remarkable, as well as the most ancient inhabitants of these regions.

## II.

This race of men, who live even at the present day in almost a primitive state of barbarity and ignorance, are scattered along the left bank of the river Volga. The three districts of the Province of Kazan which border upon Nijney and Simbirsk, are almost entirely peopled with them.

Various opinions have been given concerning the origin of this people. Some writers have asserted that the Tchouvash are the descendants of the ancient Bolgars ; but this assertion, which is supported by no historical proofs, appears only to be based on the fact of this race now occupying the localities formerly occupied by the Bolgars. Dr. Erdman, in his work on Russia, says that the formation of their bodies, and the distinctive cast of their faces, prove them to belong to the Finnish race. This opinion seems the more probable, as their language offers many traces of this origin. However this may be, it appears certain that the Tchouvash tribes are the primitive and aboriginal inhabitants of the country I am describing. Their peaceful disposition and gentleness of manners have always prevented them from forming themselves into a national body, or rendering themselves in any way dreaded by their neighbours. To these same causes may doubtless be attributed the fact that every fresh conqueror and possessor of this portion of Russia always respected this inoffensive race, which has remained up to the present day, not only unchanged in its customs and manners, but, as we remarked before, in its primitive state of simplicity and ignorance.

### III.

The Tchouvash were at first a race of shepherds. The richness and fertility of the soil they inhabit

doubtless induced them in time to devote themselves to the culture of the earth. Their villages are always well situated, and, owing to this, have a much more picturesque appearance than those of their Russian and Tartar neighbours. In general, they choose for this purpose a locality as remote as possible from the high road, on some elevated ground, near some rivulet or spring, and in spots sheltered by mountains. There are seldom more than thirty houses in a village, and these are built without any plan or system, according to the humour or whim of their owners. This is the reason why a Tchouvash village does not offer that disagreeable uniformity which distinguishes the Russian hamlets. Each habitation is built in the centre of a spacious yard, in which are erected the various buildings necessary for the peasant,—barns, stables, sheds, all are at hand in the enclosure alluded to. It sometimes happens that the same yard contains several cottages, belonging to members of the same family, generally consisting of married sons, who inhabit a separate dwelling.

The interior of their houses presents a very wretched appearance, the walls being completely blackened by the smoke, for their cottages have no chimneys, and when a fire is lighted in them the smoke can only escape through one small and only window. Wide wooden benches, which line the walls of the apartment, serve both for their

beds during the night, and seats during the day. A common table, one or two stools,—this is the only furniture their *izbas* (cottages) can boast of. In front of the oven is hung a cast-iron pot or saucepan, in which the food of the family is prepared ; the petch being only heated for the purpose of baking bread, or in winter for warming the house. The whole of the Tchouvash family, men, women, and children, live, eat, and sleep in this one room, which, in the winter, is filthy beyond description. It is owing to this mode of living, shut up as they are for eight long months of the year, in close and dark dwellings, that may be attributed the feeble and suffering constitution of the Tchouvash, as well as their diminutive stature. Their faces are always pale, and their eyes rather sunk and spiritless. Their bodies are generally thin and delicate ; their minds are gifted with a very scanty share of intelligence ; they evince but little skill or dexterity in any task they are forced to undertake ; they are slow and inactive in their movements, and somewhat inclined to indolence. The two most prominent traits of their character are however extreme timidity and superstition. With all these defects, this simple race can still boast of virtues which many more civilized nations have lost. Their patience, benevolence, and hospitality are indeed admirable. There exist not, and have probably never existed, any written laws among them, but the laws of nature

are deeply engraved in their hearts. The evangelical maxim, which serves as the base of every legislation in every country, that of "not doing unto others what we would not wish to be done unto ourselves," is better observed among the Tchouvash than among any other nation in the world. Thus they look upon an injury done to a neighbour as one of the greatest of crimes. They seldom or never quarrel among themselves, and when they do so, it is generally in a moment when they are intoxicated by liquor. The way in which they settle these disputes is both droll and simple-hearted : very willing to submit to any authority, even to the lowest, it is generally to the beadle of the Russian church of their locality that they refer for the purposes of arbitration. With this object in view, the two disputants seat themselves in a *telega* (the common cart of the Russian peasants), back to back, in order that they may not see each other's face during the journey ; on arriving at the very first *kaback* (drinking-house) they meet with on their road, they cannot resist the desire of alighting, in order to take another glass of *vodka* (Russian spirits), which their drive and grief seem to have rendered necessary. This restorative glass having rendered them still more intoxicated than before, they begin, over their bumpers, to accuse each other of the wrong they have suffered ; and having eased their heart in this manner of its load of rancour and animosity, they finish by throw-

ing themselves affectionately into each other's arms, or falling penitently at each other's feet. Their reconciliation effected, they naturally consider themselves bound to celebrate it by a fresh bumper ; so that, instead of continuing their journey to the house of the beadle, they return to their homes, "as drunk as a piper at a feast," singing and kissing each other, and better friends than ever.

Thus, if disputes and quarrels are matters of rare occurrence among the Tchouvash, save when they happen to be in a state of drunkenness, inveterate enmity and hatred are passions likewise almost unknown to this race. But if by chance it happens that these detestable feelings find a place in the heart of a Tchouvash, the way in which he revenges himself can scarcely be imagined by the reader. The offended party (will it be believed?) goes, during the night, into the yard of his enemy, *and there hangs himself!* As the inquest is held on the very spot where the suicide occurred, this event naturally draws to the place the police of the district, with their numerous assistants, writers, soldiers, etc. ; and the consequence is, that the proprietor of the house where the crime took place is an object of the severest judiciary investigation of the authorities. The Tchouvash cannot imagine that there exists a greater calamity than to fall into the hands of justice ; and the poor wretched being who commits suicide for the sake of vengeance, firmly be-

lieves that he has done his enemy, by such a step, the greatest injury it was possible to inflict on him and his family.

## IV.

The Tchouvash are very sensible to any acts of kindness which may be done them, and their gratitude is always shown by some token more solid than mere words and exterior signs, so common among more civilized people. Though their personal appearance is so delicate, and the interior of their houses so dirty and blackened, it must not however be supposed on that account that they are poor and miserable; on the contrary, they live in general more at their ease than many of their Russian neighbours. A Tchouvash takes care always to keep a good stock of corn in reserve for a period of want or calamity; some of them even have corn in their possession that was sown and reaped by their grandfathers. During the years of famine which, on so many occasions, have afflicted the country they inhabit, whilst their less provident neighbours, the Russians and Tartars, were suffering cruelly from want, the Tchouvash not only escaped the almost general calamity, but on some occasions showed themselves both able and willing to share their corn with the hungry and the indigent.

Their principal riches consist in cattle, corn, and

bee-hives. The only apparent distinction however that exists between the rich and the poor, is the circumstance of the former having a greater number of sheds and outhouses built in the interior of the yard of their dwellings, and a large wooden gateway, which the wealthy adorn with rude carvings, produced by the hatchet of some Russian peasant: this is the greatest and, I believe, the only luxury they indulge in. With regard to the comforts of life—fine clothing, good eating, etc.—to such matters the Tchouvash are perfectly indifferent; both rich and poor wear the same dress and eat the same food.

A Tchouvash, however wealthy he may be, seldom thinks of killing for the use of his family either a cow, a sheep, or even a fowl; all is sent to the nearest market to be sold, not excepting even the eggs, butter, honey, etc. The money these various commodities produce is kept for periods of want, or some other emergency. I have been given to understand that several Tchouvash carry on a considerable trade in corn, and there is no doubt but that many have no small capital in money. In 1840, a Tchouvash is said to have spent more than six thousand roubles to get his son freed from the military service, and to find a substitute to take his place. We cannot conceal here the fact that their candour and simplicity are too often turned to advantage by their Russian and Tartar neighbours,

who buy the products of their industry at a very low price, which enables them to make in consequence a very lucrative commerce at the expense of this timid and confiding race.

It is worthy of remark, likewise, that no beggars are to be met with in their villages, and should the traveller happen to see one, there is ten chances to one that he will find, on examination, that the suppliant for charity is some cunning Russian, who, thanks to the beneficent and hospitable character of this people, makes such a trade more than usually productive in similar localities.

One thing however is deeply and bitterly to be regretted, namely, the passion for drinking which this race, so good, simple, kind, and generous, indulges in to such a lamentable extent. It is rare to meet with a single Tchouvash who does not drink with pleasure and to excess the Russian spirits called *vodka*. It requires but little of this strong liquor to have an effect on the weak frames and still weaker intelligence of this people; and it is painful to relate how common a vice drunkenness is among them. It is not the *vodka* alone that they drink; they brew from the hop a species of strong, bitter, and wretched beer, which produces the same effect as spirits, and almost as quickly.

As regards their mode of living, nothing can be simpler or more patriarchal. Their principal occupations are the labours of the field. Their food is

very coarse and common, and prepared in the most uncleanly manner. They are very fond of vegetables, of which they make a kind of soup by the aid of milk and butter ; this soup is called *bol-drane*. Another of their favourite dishes is a species of porridge, made of different kinds of coarse flour, and which they name *yaschkal*. They are very partial likewise to a dish called *ischka*, composed of buckwheat, milk, cabbage, and onions ; on days of great festivity they put in this dish fowls and garlic. They seldom eat any kind of meat, and it is probably owing to this that their teeth are as white as ivory. Tobacco-smoking is their greatest enjoyment.

From the observations of the different medical men who inhabit this country, we learn that the Tchouvash race is seldom subject to grave maladies and distempers. Ophthalmia, the disease of the eyes, is what they most suffer from ; and this, doubtless, in a great measure arises from the thick and constant smoke which exists in their chimneyless houses. This is a great evil, it cannot be denied ; but every evil has its good, and it was probably to this very cause, which rendered their bodies like smoked hams, that the cholera morbus, which in 1831 ravaged so cruelly the Russian and Tartar villages, respected those of the Tchouvash, among whom scarce a case of this frightful distemper was known to exist.

## V.

We have before alluded to the extreme repugnance and aversion which the Tchouvash race entertain for any relation or communication with their neighbours. This feeling is so strong, that very few would run the risk of leaving their native villages even for the greatest temptation of pecuniary gain ; it may therefore easily be imagined with what a horror they view the military service, to which they are however, like the Russians, obliged to furnish the required number of men. When the period of recruiting arrives, it is impossible to imagine the many means to which they have recourse to avoid being enrolled in the lists of the army. Some there are who, for two entire months, eat scarcely any food and work almost day and night, till their bodies become actually attenuated with fatigue, by which means they manage to give themselves so sickly and enfeebled an appearance that they are naturally considered unfit for the service, and are sent back to their homes, greatly to their heart's content, even though the relief be bought by a subsequent life of sickness and infirmity. Others hesitate not to employ more violent means to attain this end. There come among them quacks who exercise a most iniquitous occupation, which they turn however to good account as regards its payment. Can it be believed that this occupation consists in muti-

lating the human body so as to render the men who submit to the operation unfit for service? This infamous practice, strictly forbidden as it is by the Russian laws, is still occasionally executed even at the present day. To get exempt from the service, the Tchouvash do not regret either their money, their health, nor even the loss of certain corporeal advantages which, removed by unskilled operators, produce the most irreparable and fatal consequences. And God only knows how cheated and deluded these poor men are at the period alluded to; happy likewise are they if, after having made such great sacrifices of health and expended such considerable sums, they attain the end of their efforts and escape being enrolled. For it sometimes happens that the father of a family, after nearly ruining himself in distributing his money to rogues who persuade him they can enable his son to avoid the fate so dreaded by all, finds that all his pains have been fruitless, and that both his son and money have left him, the one as unlikely ever to return as the other.

## VI.

The simplicity and credulity of the Tchouvash are beyond description. Both the Russian and Tartar peasants who live in this vicinity make no scruple to turn these qualities to their advantage, and cruelly abuse their confiding and unsuspecting nature.

Here is one instance among the many we could relate.

A young Russian woman, who had been forced from bad conduct to leave her native town, frequented for a long time the Tchouvash villages, disguised in man's attire, and passing herself off as a merchant from the town of Yaroslav. Out of a thousand schemes by which she managed to live at the expense of these poor people, the following is the drollest and most amusing.

Having heard that a certain miller was seeking to purchase a large quantity of corn, she (or rather *he*, for she personified the man) went to the miller's abode and related to him that he had come from Yaroslav, for the express purpose of purchasing corn,—that he had already bought of the Tchouvash peasants a considerable supply, but that unforeseen circumstances which had transpired during his absence required him to return home without a moment's delay. In consequence of this, he found himself induced to dispose of the corn he had purchased at a very reduced price. The miller, delighted at this lucky event, concluded a bargain, and gave the Yaroslav merchant a portion of the sum in advance. Thus successful, our artful schemer immediately set out for several Tchouvash villages, offering a very high price for corn, which, he said, he had engaged to furnish to a miller well known in the neighbourhood. The Tchouvash consented to furnish him with the quantity of corn he required, and to convey it in their own carts to the mill in

question. On arriving thither, followed by a great number of carts, filled with corn, the merchant coolly demanded from the miller half of the sum agreed upon, and, having received it, gave orders to the Tchouvash to deposit the contents of their waggons in the barn of the former. The unsuspecting Tchouvash willingly complied, and while they were busily engaged in the task the cunning impostor managed to escape, and was never after heard of. The Tchouvash, having unloaded their carts, sought in vain for the merchant, and required from the miller payment for the corn he had received. The latter explained that he had already paid three parts of the sum agreed upon, and offered only the remaining fourth to the cheated vendors, who now clearly saw the way they had been imposed on. What was now to be done?—to address their complaints to the local authorities, or to put up with the loss without taking any measures either to regain their money or pursue the offender? From what we have stated it will easily be supposed that the Tchouvash preferred the latter alternative, and returned home cornless and moneyless, and wondering that such deceit could exist in the world, of which they knew and wished to know so little.

Another anecdote will serve to show still clearer the credulous nature of this simple race.

A rich Tchouvash died, and his children, according to their religious customs, buried him, leaving

not only the ordinary quantity of food and clothing on the grave (for the Tchouvash imagine that the dead require food and clothing as well as the living), but placed in his coffin the sum of one hundred roubles to pay his travelling expenses in the other world.

Of this portion of their superstitious notions we shall speak more hereafter; suffice it to say here, that some Russian peasants of the neighbourhood, having heard of this fresh act of filial piety, resolved to turn it to their advantage. They went, during the night, to the Tchouvash's place of burial, and, having disinterred the dead, they opened the coffin, took the money from the pockets of the defunct, placing moreover the corpse in a sitting position, with a bottle of spirits in one hand and a pack of cards in the other. This done, on the following morning they went direct to the house of the deceased in order to inform his children that their dead father, instead of lying quiet in his grave, passed his time in drinking and gambling, as might easily be ascertained by going to the cemetery. It will scarcely be believed that so palpable an imposture could be accredited by the Tchouvash, but such really was the case. The whole family, horrified at the news, hurried to the grave, where they convinced themselves of the fact; and, shocked as they were at this bad conduct, they addressed the most fervent prayers and supplications to the deceased,

entreating him to remain quiet, and not to give such scandal to his village. This done, they placed him again in his coffin, giving him a fresh sum of money, after which they filled up the grave once more and retired. Will the reader believe that three successive times the rogues repeated this abominable and sacrilegious trickery, and that three times likewise the credulity of the Tchouvash enabled them to despoil the corpse both of his clothes, food, and money. On the fourth demonstration of this gambling propensity, the sons, irritated by the incorrigibly bad conduct of their father, by the advice of the Iomza (their priest) inflicted a severe punishment on him. They first nailed his feet to the coffin to prevent his rising ; then they encircled the coffin with iron hoops, and fixed it immoveably in the earth, by driving a huge wooden pile across it. It need scarcely be added, that as they put no more money in the pockets of the deceased, the latter remained for the future in his grave, as quiet and well-behaved as could be wished.

## VII.

We have before said that the Tchouvash are Pagans. As is the case with the mythological notions of all the Pagan races of the north, their religion is founded upon two principles, that of good and evil. They believe in consequence in two supreme powers, —a good Genius, whom they call *Tora*, and an evil

Genius, whom they name *Keremet*. The first, they imagine, requires no sacrifices, and they offer him none. The other, they suppose, requires his wrath to be continually appeased by offerings, by which means alone he is induced to leave mankind at peace; a neglect of such sacrifices would bring down upon them, they believe, pestilence, famine, war, and a thousand other calamities. To Tora they erect no temples: his place of worship is where they happen to be. For the worship of Kereinet however they have a special place: this is generally in a forest, near a spring, to which they give his name. In their habitations likewise they offer him sacrifices of various kinds.

Not being able to imagine a state of perfect happiness in which woman takes no part, they suppose that their Gods have wives, like common mortals. They believe therefore that Tora has a spouse, called Tora Ama, or the wife of God. For her they have the greatest veneration; they implore her aid particularly in difficult cases of child-bearing, and under her auspices they place their domestic happiness. The wife of Keremet, on the other hand, is, in their opinion, ten times more malignant and inclined to mischief than the God of Evil himself: it is she, they believe, that induces her husband to send them all the ills which afflict them.

The Tchouvash, as we have before remarked, are naturally indolent, and not over clear-sighted, either

in a physical or moral sense ; they consequently suppose their divinities to have the same imperfections as themselves, and for this purpose they have assigned to them a species of helpers, called Poulicks, whose business consists in acquainting the Gods with the actions of men. They believe likewise that both the good and evil genii have a family of children, who preside with their parents over every phenomenon of nature and follow them from place to place. These divinities of an inferior order, the Poulicks, traverse, they suppose, the earth and heavens, sometimes on horseback, sometimes in chariots or on sledges (if it be winter), urging poor mortals to good or to evil, and then running to give an account of the actions to which they themselves have driven them. In fine, the Tchouvash believe, that if they have passed a good life, and faithfully offered up the sacrifices prescribed by their religion, they may themselves be numbered among these subaltern divinities, and rule the fate of their neighbours.

Their chief priest, whom they name Iomza, is looked upon by them with great respect and even veneration. He unites in his own person the quadruple functions of priest, soothsayer, sorcerer, and physician. The Iomza presides over all their sacrifices ; he alone can tell them what divinities they must implore to avert a menaced evil, and what sacrifices must be offered up. He it is who desig-

nates the species of animal that is to be immolated; an ox, a horse, a cow, a sheep, sometimes a fowl is chosen for the purpose; but in every case, they consider it of importance that the victim should be bought at the first price asked by the vendor; a neglect of this would render, they imagine, the sacrifice fruitless. Should it happen, as is very often the case, that all the ceremonies prescribed by the Iomza do not produce the desired result, the Tchouvash follow without the least repugnance an advice which their priest gives them, namely that of betaking themselves to some neighbouring Christian church, where they burn a taper in honour of the God of the Russians, and entreat him to help them.

It almost always happens that the Iomza is a rogue, who turns to his own advantage the credulity and ignorance of this superstitious race. Dr. Fouks relates that an Iomza being presented to him on some occasion, informed him to his great astonishment that he had learned the secret science of magic at St. Petersburg, where he had lived for twenty years in the capacity of a barber's assistant: he had been taught, he said, the art by a Russian soldier, born in Kieff, a town which is believed by the Russian peasantry to swarm with wizards, witches, etc. It may easily be imagined what a fair field for dupery and personal gain a rogue like this would find among these simple people, who

place such implicit faith in his jugglery and pretended power.

Some of the religious ceremonies of the Tchouvash have however so simple and patriarchal a character, that even Christianity would find no reason for condemning them : take for example, the *Fête of the New Corn*. This ceremony takes place annually, at harvest-time, when bread is first baked from the flour of that year's grinding. On this occasion, in every house of the village, a sufficient quantity of bread and beer is got ready. On the day of the *fête*, no food is touched previous to the ceremony. The Tchouvash assemble in the house or yard of the chief or oldest family in the village, and all rise on the arrival of the Iomza ; the latter then tells the Tchouvash to begin their prayers, after having informed each of them what special divinity he is to address. One is to pray to Tora, the chief God ; another to the Mother of God ; a third to the Son of God ; a fourth is commissioned to implore the God of the Forests ; a fifth, the God of the Highways ; some supplicate the divinities who protect the cattle and the poultry ; others the sun, the mother of the sun, the moon, etc. etc. These various prayers are recited by the Tchouvash with their faces turned towards the east ; and when they are finished, a large table covered with new loaves, a box filled with salt, and a large tankard of beer, are placed in the midst of the throng. As many

cups or mugs as there are persons present are then brought: these the Iomza fills with beer, giving one to each of the devotees, who, turning once more his face to the east, recites another short prayer, and then drinks off his mug of beer, eating at the same time a slice of the new-baked bread. The sons, with their wives and children, then approach their parents, and kneeling before them, pronounce the following prayer.

"We pray to Tora that he may keep you in life and health, and enable us next year to celebrate with you the same festival."

After this they begin to drink the beer again, and the ceremony is concluded by dancing and singing.

The Tchouvash cannot properly be called idolaters; they have no idols, no "graven image" to which they have given a divine power. They possess however a species of amulet or talisman, which they call *yrich*. It consists of a bit of tin, attached to a branch of mountain-ash, which may be seen hanging over the door of every habitation, and to which they attribute the power of saving the family from the spells and machinations of the evil genii.

The sacrifices prescribed by their priests are performed once a year. It is generally in a ravine or forest that the Tchouvash assemble to perform this religious duty. This period of the year they call *Sinza*, and lasts as long as the corn is in blossom.

During the three weeks of its celebration, no one is allowed to work, for the Tchouvash believe that any labour, especially in the fields, would spoil the crop.

At the close of the Sinza, the following religious ceremony takes place. The inhabitants of different villages assemble together, in a spot where several oxen, sheep, etc., are collected for the sacrifice. Prayers are recited by the Iomzas in the open air, and the sacrifice then commences. Before the animal is immolated, the Iomza pours over it a jug of cold water; if the victim trembles, it is deemed fit to be offered up, and is immediately slaughtered; if the animal, fortunately for itself, has not trembled, it is looked upon as impure, and left to live. After having immolated all the oxen brought for the purpose, they begin to pray again, and this prayer lasts upwards of four hours! The flesh of the victims is then boiled in several large cauldrons, forming a soup, of which they partake. The bones, skins, and entrails of the oxen are burnt by the Iomza, and the ashes are scattered in different directions, with ceremonies marked out for the purpose. In former days, the ceremony of the Sinza was followed by a whole week of feasting and merriment; at the present day, these festivities only last one or two days. No beer nor spirits are drunk on the day of the sacrifice, at which the women moreover are not permitted to assist.

In 1745, a portion of the Tchouvash race was

induced to embrace the tenets of the Greco-Russian Church; about two thousand of the latter may be found at the present day in the province of Kazan. It is however certain that these converts, though they have consented to be called Christians, have remained secretly attached to the superstitious belief and usages of their forefathers. The sublime and mysterious truths of Christianity were naturally unintelligible to these semi-barbarous tribes, even allowing that they had been imparted by missionaries capable of making them felt and appreciated, which, we may be permitted to suppose, was not always the case.

### VIII.

The Tchouvash women are not in general handsome, though you may sometimes meet with some tolerably pretty. They marry late in life, and are in the most passive state of obedience to their husbands. They enjoy more liberty than the Tartar women, for all the cares of the household devolve upon them; and, contrary again to Tartar customs, the richer a Tchouvash woman is, the more she works. In general they embroider in perfection with silk cord of various colours. Their dress is always very neat and tasty; it consists of a long robe made of plain white linen embroidered with silk, tied round the waist by a broad sash or scarf. Their shoes, like those of the men, resemble a spe-

cies of sandal, made of the plaited bark of trees. Their feet and legs are enveloped up to the knee with long strips of black woollen stuff or flannel. To allow their naked feet to be seen is considered as very indecent; for this reason, even in their houses, they never go barefooted; and the first thing they put on in the morning is their shoes and make-shift stockings. The unmarried portion of the women generally wear their hair in tresses, hanging on their backs; for a married woman however to wear her hair in this manner would be considered a great sin. Their head-dress is called *kaschpa*, and consists of a round species of hat, adorned with a multitude of coins of different sizes, arranged in rows. For their holiday costume they add a white apron, likewise embroidered with silk, and put round their necks an ornament covered with coins, some of which are gilt. In a word, their costume is both picturesque and pleasing.

Their marriages are accompanied with the most strange and singular customs. Madame Fouks, the wife of the Doctor who furnished me with such valuable matter concerning the Tartars, gave me the following account of a Tchouvash marriage, at which she assisted. This is how she described it.

#### IX.

“At nine o’clock in the morning,” she says, “I arrived at the village where the marriage was to

take place, and alighted at the house of the father of the bride. The yard had been carefully swept, and, all around, benches had been placed, formed of rude planks resting on logs of wood. At the ends of one of these benches were attached two branches of birch, the leaves already withered, and on one hung a richly embroidered shirt. This was the *place d'honneur*, prepared for the father and mother of the bride, who sat there with looks of the most inexpressible gravity and importance. A great number of Tchouvash men and women were seated on the other benches, busily engaged in drinking beer. The bride was not among them: according to custom, she was engaged in paying farewell visits to her friends and companions. Half an hour passed in the midst of the greatest calm and profoundest silence. All at once, a loud noise, caused by a medley of voices, bells, and horns, was heard, and a wild excited crowd rushed into the yard. This was the bridegroom, who, with his suite, had come to fetch his bride. Both he and his companions were on horseback. They were followed by a cart, containing a cask of beer and one of the Russian spirits called *vodka*; these were meant as presents for the parents of the bride. After this, one of the bridegroom's attendants alighted, and gave the *kalym* to the father of the bride, who thereupon invited his future son-in-law to take his seat beside him. Then began the ceremony of

drinking the spirits and beer, which the latter had brought with him. Some time after, the sounds of the horns, etc., were again heard ; this was to announce that the bride was coming. She entered the yard in a cart, followed by several other carts filled with young girls, her attendants. Her head was covered with a veil, and she was dressed in a blue cloth kaftan. The bridegroom now sprang forward, helped her to alight from the cart, and conducted her into the house ; here she began to cry and weep most bitterly, while her companions were dancing and singing around her to console her. Her veil was now removed, and she presented to each of the guests a glass of spirits, to drink to her health. This lasted about an hour ; after which, she approached her parents to bid them farewell, which was done with loud sabbings and moanings : this ceremony over, the bridegroom took his bride by the hand, set her on horseback, while her companions threw over her an immense shawl, which covered her entire person, and almost touched the earth. The companions of the bridegroom likewise mounted their horses, while the former led the horse on which his bride was sitting out of the yard. Then taking a whip, in the presence of the whole throng, the bridegroom gave his bride three successive blows on the back, and so violently that she could not repress a cry at each application of the whip. This peculiar caress is practised at Tchou-

vash marriages, to show the bride that she is now under the power of her husband, and that she must forget her state of maidenhood, and submit to the will of her lord in everything.

"The nuptial *cortége* now directed its way to the village where the bridegroom lived. On arriving, the bride was led into a house next-door to her husband's, and was solemnly crowned with the *kaschpa*, a cap which is put on and used by married women. The bride was then brought into the house of her husband, veiled, and took her place near the petch. A minute after, a youth entered, holding in his hand a long stick, at the end of which was attached a hook ; and, after making two or three turns in the room, he stopped before the bride, and with the point of this hooked stick, he removed the veil which covered the bride.

"The latter was now led to the marriage couch, prepared in an adjoining barn, and the guests after this began to eat and drink in downright earnest. Some hours after the bride returned to the guests and took a seat on the bench. As many relations of the two families as were present, so many mugs were placed beside them. Each of these mugs the bride first filled with beer ; then, dropping in it a piece of silver money, presented it, on her knees, to the relative beside whom it had been placed. This she did in succession to all, beginning with her father-in-law, a task which must have tired her

much. The coin was meant as a present to the party to whom it was offered. The bride now received from her father-in-law an order to prepare the dish called *salma*, and for this purpose the sister of the bridegroom presented to her two pails, in order that she might go and fetch water from the river, whither she went, followed by a procession of young girls, her companions. Here the following ceremony took place :—the sister of the bridegroom having filled the pails with water, the bride immediately upset them ; this was done a second time ; having filled the pails for the third time, the bride allowed her sister-in-law to carry them towards the habitation. When the latter had gone a hundred yards the bride ran after her, kissed her several times, took the two pails from her, and carried them herself to the house. Here she began to prepare the *salma*, which was soon got ready. A plate of this food she placed before her father-in-law, who began to eat it with the most solemn air of gravity that can be imagined. This was done to infer that no doubt existed as to the virgin purity of the bride ; otherwise the father-in-law would have ordered the *salma* she had prepared to be thrown to the dogs. The rest of the guests now partook of the same dish, and the feasting began ; the most grotesque dances, mingled with the wildest songs, succeeded ; the vodka-bottle circulated gaily, and so effectually acted on the senses of the guests, both

men and women, that soon the scene became one of general disorder and intoxication,—the closing scene, by the bye, of every *fête* among this poor uncivilized race of people.”

Such are the ceremonies that accompany a Tchouvash marriage. Those that precede it are not less singular. When a father wishes to marry his son, he never chooses a wife for him in the same village he inhabits. Accompanied by one of his nearest relations, he goes to a neighbouring village, where he knows there is some maiden that suits him. He addresses himself direct to her parents, and if the latter consent to the marriage they settle about the *kalym*, which is always in proportion to the dowry which the maiden is to receive. In general the Tchouvash are very generous in this respect: they give their daughters a part of all they possess; a cow, several sheep, a pair of every kind of domestic fowl they rear, a cart, a horse, ten or twenty gowns, and other articles of dress,—such is generally the marriage portion of a Tchouvash girl. A rich Tchouvash has been known to give as many as a hundred gowns to his daughter.

## X.

The Tchouvash believe that after death two distinct conditions are reserved for mankind. The good will go and inhabit, they say, a land of plenty, where they will find all they most love upon earth,

—their parents, friends, cattle, agricultural instruments, even their kitchen utensils,—and all will be in the best condition possible. The wicked, on the contrary, will wander in cold and sterile deserts, and in the shape of fleshless skeletons. Their burials show how singularly they are impressed with these notions.

As soon as a Tchouvash dies, they remove his body from the house into the yard : here they wash the corpse ; after which they dress it in the holiday garb of the deceased, place it in the coffin, and bring it back once more into the house : this they do very secretly, in order that the Iomza may know nothing of the matter. In the coffin of the dead man they put all that he needed most during his life,—his pipe, tobacco, a snuff-box full of snuff, and, if he chanced to be a mechanic, the instruments of his handicraft. In the coffins of the women they place likewise everything they used in their daily occupations,—linen, silk, cotton, needles, scissors, etc. In every coffin they invariably put a smaller or a larger sum of money, according to the means of the family ; and it is owing to this that their neighbours make no scruple, as we have seen, in violating the Tchouvash graves, and stealing the gold and silver which the good and simple-hearted Tchouvash, with a pious feeling, give so willingly, in order to assist the wants and necessities which they suppose poor man is still subject to in the next world.

Not only have the Tchouvash a great veneration for the dead, but they are firmly persuaded that the latter revisit, from time to time, their abodes and families, particularly those who happened to be of a quarrelsome and violent character. They have, in particular, a great dread of that portion of the dead whose bodies, when living, were deformed, or very ugly ; for they look upon such as having been wizards and witches, and they feel convinced that they will not remain quiet in their graves, but will rise during the night, in order to continue their abominable spells and witchcraft. The pagan portion of this race are so strongly under the influence of these notions, and dread so much these nocturnal visits of the dead, that they nail the bodies of those they have most reason to fear to the coffins, by passing large nails through their heart and the soles of their feet ; and the coffin itself they surround with iron rings, by which means they hope to prevent the escape of these dangerous persons from the grave. Six weeks after the death of such objects of dread, they sacrifice to them a young stallion (if the deceased be a man), and a mare (if the deceased be a woman), hoping by such means to keep their spirit at rest. One of the best and surest means of keeping away these phantoms from their abodes, they believe to be the due celebration of the "*Fête of the Dead*," which they, in consequence, most religiously and punctually attend once

a year. For this purpose they congregate together from their different villages, in the cemetery, which is always situated some ten or twelve miles from their places of abode. Each of them brings with him at least a small cask of beer, and sometimes one of spirits. The ceremony commences with a prayer, repeated by the Iomza, in which they supplicate Tora (God) to grant to the deceased eternal rest, and to keep them from wandering on the earth. This done, the provisions that have been brought are placed upon the grave of a parent, a brother, or some other relation. A certain quantity of coarse white linen is then spread near the grave. After these preliminary arrangements they begin to eat of the different dishes, in honour of the deceased, saying at the same time, "We are thinking of you ! here is plenty of food, spirits, and beer for you,—take it, we begrudge nothing for your sakes ; therefore be quiet—do not quarrel in your graves. Do not trouble us ; do not return to your abodes."

Thus speaking and eating, they place the remains of the feast in a large wooden bowl. The same thing is done with the spirits and beer, which they taste, and then pour into the same bowl, continuing to repeat the prayer above mentioned. At the end of this ceremony, whatever could not be put into the bowls, is placed by the side of the grave ; the Tchouvash then wiping their mouths and hands with the linen we before spoke of, and which was

spread on the various tombs, all exclaim again : “Rise during the night ! eat and drink to your hearts’ content ; there are napkins to wipe yourselves with ; but remember—be quiet, do not torment us, do not be troublesome !” At the head of the graves they place likewise shirts, sandals, and other articles of dress. During the whole time they pass in the cemetery, these simple people converse with the dead just as they would do with the living. These various pious duties accomplished, the entire throng then indulges in the most disgusting intemperance, and drink to excess. The scene, which at first presented so much piety and simple-heartedness, now offers nothing but the most revolting drunkenness and riot. All the musical instruments they make use of are put in requisition on the occasion, and produce a most frightful noise, played on as they are at the moment by men, women, and children, who are all in the most complete state of brutal intoxication. With this musical discord are mingled shrieks, sabbings, cries, songs, and bursts of the most frenzied laughter. The women in particular, who have had to suffer from the bad character of their husbands, indulge in the most furious demonstrations of anger, and commit on the tombs of their deceased lords and masters most ridiculous acts of vengeance. Indeed, those who have had an opportunity of witnessing this disgusting scene, will not easily forget it.

These orgies generally last till nightfall, or rather till there remains nothing more to drink ; that portion of the Tchouvash who can still stand now get on their legs and return home, helping their less sober companions into the carts and chariots in which they came to the cemetery.

As soon as they have retired, the peasants of the neighbourhood enter the burial-ground, take possession of all that the Tchouvash brought with them for their deceased relatives, and on their retreat with their sacrilegious spoils, they are succeeded by a multitude of dogs, who come to enjoy likewise a meal at the expense of the poor credulous race we are describing.

## XI.

The language of the Tchouvash is by no means harmonious, and very poor in words and expressions. It is composed only of one thousand six hundred and forty-six words. Some learned writers assert that it is derived from the Finnish. One thing is certain however, that at the present day it contains, in a corrupted form, a great many Russian and Tartar words, which is the natural result of the neighbourhood of these races. The Tchouvash, having never attained to any degree of civilization, have in consequence no special alphabet. When the Gospel was translated into their language, it was found necessary to use the letters of

the Russian alphabet. There is moreover to be found among this race of men nothing that bears a literary character, for, having no alphabet of their own, they can boast neither of historical records nor of any work of imagination. Their only poetry consists in their *impromptu* songs. These poetical effusions likewise have no systematic form of composition. The Tchouvash poet cannot be said to compose a song: whatever occurs at the moment to his imagination he utters, and his effusions have no rhyme, no regular metre. They sing about what they see—about what they are doing. If they traverse a forest, they chant concerning the trees, the grass, the walks they have had therein with the object of their love, how they gathered the berries, culled the wild flowers, etc. etc. If they sail upon a river, they sing the praises of its waters, its freshness, purity, the rapidity of the stream, etc. On the highway they sing about all they meet with, all they pass, all that happens to them; they praise their horses, their carts, the wheels of their vehicles, in a most irregular chant, and in the most monotonous and inharmonious tone of voice.

Still there are to be found among them some songs that have passed from generation to generation by means of oral tradition. These were doubtless composed by some Tchouvash of greater sensibility than is common to the race, for a certain delicacy of thought, and even a tinge of sentiment, may be remarked in some of them.

The following is a specimen of these effusions:—

*Song, in the Tchouvash tongue.*

“ Ingay arym khir bolmee,  
 Kioulnee torik siout bolmee  
 Ingay darcem meen diareen ?  
 Pra, koumoul korr, diareen,  
 Pra, koumoul kormarce,  
 Tioumiourak khozak siouramebeer.  
 Adia inkgay serdaya,  
 Serdyam samrick bui masteen ;  
 Adia eenkgay botrana,  
 Botrann pismiack bui mastcen ;  
 Adia eenkgay seerlaya,  
 Seerla bolmann bui lasteen.”

*Translation.*

The young married woman can never again be a maid,  
 as cheese can no more become milk.

I said to a young girl, “ Wilt thou enjoy the bliss of  
 love ? ”

“ I have never tried its joys,” she answered, “ nor do  
 I wish to do so.”

“ You were not born to live alone,” said I. “ Come,  
 young girl, come and gather flowers with me in the  
 wood.”

“ The flowers are not yet in blossom,” she said ; “ I  
 will not go.”

“ Then, young girl, let us go and gather wild straw-  
 berries in the forest.”

“ No, no ! ” she said, “ the strawberries are not ripe—  
 I will not go ! ”

This specimen of the Tchouvash poetry will suf-

fice to give the reader a good idea of their songs, as well as of the simplicity of their ideas, always confined to the immediate circle of their daily habits, which are naturally so uniform, rusticated, and so little varied by accident or adventure.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE TCHEREMISSE RACE.

- I. OCCUPATIONS AND DOMESTIC LIFE.—II. SUPERSTITIONS AND FESTIVALS.—III. AMUSEMENTS.—IV. RELIGIOUS NOTIONS.—V. TCHEREMISSE OF THE MOUNTAINS AND THE PLAINS.—VI. FEMALE COSTUME; WEDDINGS.—VII. PRAYERS AND CEREMONIES.

## I.

THE Tcheremisse, as well as the Tchouvash, have inhabited from time immemorial the Province of Kazan and the banks of the river Volga. Nestor makes mention of them in his Genealogy of Nations; and in the Russian Annals they are spoken of as having continually assisted the Tartars in their attacks upon the Muscovites. Their origin is probably the same as that of the Tchouvash, to whom they have a great resemblance. They, as well as the latter, not only inhabit the province of Kazan, but are to be found in other parts of Russia. In the province of Kazan they number about sixty-eight thousand, and are spread in two districts bordering on the Volga. Those on the right bank are called “the Tcheremisse of the Mountains,” and those on the opposite bank

“the Tcheremisse of the Plain.” There is however a striking difference between these two races, which proceeds from the localities they inhabit. A great part of them, as well as the Tchouvash, are still Pagans, but many have been converted to Christianity, though, in general, even these remain secretly attached to their ancient customs, and have retained many of their superstitious practices in matters which do not strictly interfere with the dogmas of the Christian religion.

The denomination of Tcheremisse of the Plains is not well applied, for the people thus designated inhabit forests, and not plains, of which few are to be found on the left side of the Volga, in the province of Kazan. Without doubt the left bank of the Volga was called the Bank of the Plains, in opposition to the right, which is generally mountainous. The left bank is covered with immense forests, that extend to a considerable distance; and it is in the midst of these forests that the Tcheremisse live.

This race is much more sociable and quiet than the Tchouvash, and likewise surpass greatly the latter in intelligence and cunning. Living in the midst of immense forests, the Tcheremisse are no agriculturists; indeed, the marshy and sandy soil on which they live is little calculated for cultivation, and would not repay them for the care and trouble it would require to improve it: for this reason the Tcheremisse are naturally indolent, and prefer seek-

ing an existence from the products of the chase, which their forests offer them in great abundance. They give themselves up entirely to the sports of the forest, and many find them a very lucrative employment. As marksmen they are very expert, although, generally speaking, their sight is bad. Their guns are on a very small scale, a pinch of powder and an ordinary bullet being sufficient for one charge. They are very economical with their powder, which is very difficult to procure. All the snipes and woodcocks that are offered for sale in the markets of Kazan are obtained from the Tcheremisse: the Russian traffickers of these commodities go into their villages and buy at a very low price great quantities of game, which they sell again at a considerable profit. Besides game, the Tcheremisse derive great advantages from the sale of the skins of different animals, with which their forests abound, such as wolves, foxes, squirrels, martens, etc. Many employ themselves in manufacturing bags from the bark of trees, and which are called in Russia, *kouly*; they make use of them for the corn. They never bring their different productions to Kazan themselves, where they could obtain a much higher price for them than that given by the Russian speculators who go to their homes and buy them. The sale of the bark of trees, which is made use of to curry leather, is also one of their occupations.

The domestic life of the Tcheremisse is much the

same as that of the Tchouvash. You find the same want of cleanliness and disorder in their dwellings ; however some among them have constructed houses after the manner of the Russian peasants, with stoves and chimneys, but the number of these wealthy ones is small. The most dirty and smoky houses generally belong to the richest amongst them. They are very fond of amassing sums of money, and burying them with the greatest mystery ; and often on their death-beds they refuse to divulge to their wives and families the place where their treasures lie hid. Frequently when digging in the ground, pitchers containing gold and silver are found buried. The most opulent of the Tcheremisse have always a great quantity of cattle, but no pigs ; they, as also the Tartars and Tchouvash, have an abhorrence for pork. Their food consists principally of different preparations of oatmeal and whey, and all kinds of vegetables, of which they are very fond. The more uncivilized eat the flesh of different animals, such as squirrels and hares, which they find very palatable. Often, when hunting at a distance from their homes, for days together, if their provisions are exhausted, they live on the fruit of the pine-tree and mild roots and herbs. This miserable nourishment, together with the unwholesomeness of the water they drink, and their natural want of cleanliness, renders their constitutions sickly and feeble. In the forests, where they pass the greater part of the summer, either in

hunting or preparing the bark of trees, they are continually assailed by myriads of insects and mosquitoes more or less venomous. They have always a pipe in their mouths, filled with bad tobacco ; and the unwholesome smoke it produces only serves to weaken their eyes, which are generally in a very deplorable state. It has been ascertained from documents and statistical researches that this people increase less than any other in the province.

## II.

The superstitions of the Tcheremisse are on the same principle as those of the Tchouvash, and suppose a supernatural influence, good or bad, which is invoked by the observance of certain practices, instituted, no doubt, by impostors, who from time immemorial have been aware of the want of intellect in their countrymen. Chance, which has occasionally favoured these operations, and thereby the belief in them, has caused them to be perpetuated. The superstitions of this people, up to the present time so uncivilized, are what most strike an observer at first sight ; and one is better able to judge of their national character from their pagan ceremonies and customs, than from the habits of their domestic life. As their superstitions are the same as those of the Tchouvash, which I have already described, I shall merely speak of a few practices that differ in some degree from the others.

Their manner of naming a child after birth is rather original. As soon as a child comes into the world, they run and fetch the *Kart* (the Iomza of the Tchouvash). He takes the infant in no very gentle manner in his arms, and indeed handles it rather roughly, to make it cry. Then he commences reciting a list of different names,—male if a boy, and female if a girl: the name pronounced at the moment the child ceases crying is the one chosen. If the child is silent, and does not cry, the *Kart* takes a gun-flint, and commences striking a light, reciting at the same his list of names; and the one that is pronounced at the moment the tinder catches fire is the name the child must bear.

The Pagan burials of the Tcheremisse are very simple, and, with the exception of a few prayers prescribed by the Church, are very similar to Christian burials. Six weeks after the decease, they visit the tomb of the departed, and pray that he may be permitted to return invisibly to his dwelling, and witness the repast that is given in his honour, and which invariably terminates in general intoxication.

This people are as great lovers of drunkenness as the Tchouvash. At all their feasts, with the exception of one, the *Sourem*, they drink copiously. A Tcheremisse will sell his last sheep in order that he may indulge in this horrible vice.

They have many festivals, similar to those of the

Tchouvash, differing only in the ceremonies. The following are the principal ones :—

1. *Kone Ketscha*,—the Festival of the Cattle. On this day they abstain from all food, and give nothing to their cattle to eat. They beg of Iouma (God) to preserve them safe and sound, to render them docile, and not allow them to tread down the corn. Even the Tcheremisse, who are Christians, observe this institution, so interesting in the manners of a pastoral nation.

2. *Sorta Ketscha*,—the commemoration for the dead,—celebrated also by the Christians.

3. *Aga Priam*,—the Festival of Husbandry. This Pagan festival is very solemn, and held in great veneration.

4. *Sourem* or *Schourem*,—the greatest of all the religious festivals. It is followed by an exorcism or adjuration of Schaytan (the Devil), and many singular ceremonies and practices. The Festival of the Fresh Corn is much the same as that held by the Tchouvash.

5. *Schran Yel* (the lamb's foot),—the festival of young girls,—celebrated both by Christians and Pagans. It is so called from a practice the young unmarried women have at this period, of going to the stable in the dark and catching hold of a lamb by the foot. In this manner they are supposed to learn their fortune. If the lamb happens to be young, they will marry a young man; and on the

contrary, if old, they will become the wife of an old man. This festival is not accompanied by any religious ceremony, but mere rejoicings between the young men and women. As is generally the case, these amusements consist principally in eating and drinking what has been prepared for the occasion. They also amuse themselves with games which remind one of the innocent pastimes of Europe, where young girls are forced to allow themselves, as a painful forfeit, to be kissed by the young men of the company.

### III.

Besides these national festivals, the Tchermisse, both Christian and Pagan, are in the habit of giving entertainments after the harvest is over. If the crops happen to be good, a great many entertainments are given by different individuals ; but if the harvest is bad, the rich alone entertain their friends. The guests are obliged to bring with them beer, a bottle of brandy, a roast fowl, a duck, and some cakes. The inhabitants of the same village are however exempt from this custom ; they bring with them only a plate of *salma* (a species of boiled meat) and a dish of some kind of milk-food. On the first day the refreshments prepared by the host alone are eaten, and the provisions the guests bring with them are consumed on the following days. The entertainments last three days, and they are

passed in amusements of every kind. The Tcheremisse are extremely fond of these diversions. All the musicians of the district meet there; bagpipes, violins, *balalaikas* (a species of guitar with three strings, much used by the lower classes in Russia), continue without ceasing their deafening harmony. Music and dancing follow in succession. The women never dance with the men; the grotesque Tcheremisse dances are performed either by two men or two women. After they have partaken of refreshments they separate; they generally take leave of each other on their knees. The host conducts all his guests to their carriages, and supplies them with food for their journey, at the same time thanking them for having honoured his entertainment with their presence; often these acknowledgments are accompanied with a sum of money. As these festivities entail great expense, it is only the wealthy Tcheremisse who now give them; the poorer among them have long since ceased to observe this custom.

The Festival of the Fresh Corn is celebrated in the same manner as with the Tchouvash: the only difference is, that, instead of vegetables, they have a roast dish of hare and squirrel; the prayers, recited in the Tcheremisse language, are precisely the same. The poorest individual amongst them keeps this feast, which is considered of the greatest importance. In general the Tcheremisse are great

lovers of prayer, and they seldom kill a lamb or a fowl without offering a portion of it in sacrifice to one of their gods. After having finished a meal, they gather up carefully the remains and throw them into the fire, firmly persuaded that it is an act most pleasing to their gods.

## IV.

The mythology of the Tcheremisse is associated with a particular sentiment of veneration for trees. Their principal god is called Iouma. His temple is in the centre of an immense forest, surrounded by beautiful old trees, all consecrated to the different divinities that form the train of their sovereign Iouma. This part of the forest is called *tschedra youmnata*, which means, a wood consecrated to God. On all these sacred trees, at about six feet and a half high from the ground, is suspended, in the midst of the branches, a pewter plate, about the size and form of a silver rouble. This species of talisman is called *ischta*; and the tree to which it is suspended is named *anapou*. Each year, at the festival of the Sourem, the gift is renewed; and the different ceremonies used whilst casting the plate are designed to reveal the future. The predictions however of the Kart merely consist in an announcement of happiness or misfortune, according to the different forms the metal undergoes in the operation. Prophecies are not in use

among the trees of the *tschedra*. There is always a pine-tree consecrated to *Iouma Koudourtscha*, or the God of Thunder; and an oak to *Iouma Bolgantscha*, the God of Lightning. It is beneath these trees that they implore their powerful gods to spare their granaries, and to preserve them from all misfortunes. A lime-tree is generally consecrated to the earth, and a fir-tree to *Keava*, the angel who stands before Iouma. Keremet is, as with the Tchouvash, the God of Evil. The homage paid to Iouma is a homage of love and gratitude, for all the blessings they receive; but Keremet is feared and dreaded, for it is he who overwhelms them with all kinds of evils,—sickness, famine, etc. This sentiment of dread, so different from that of the adoration which they have for Iouma, has caused them to consecrate to Keremet, the God of Evil, a magnificent wood, where they offer sacrifices to appease him, when any great misfortune befalls them. The Tcheremisse, who are Pagans, never pass near the place where these sacrifices are offered without getting off their horses and prostrating themselves on the ground. The Christians are equally afraid of this formidable god; but they likewise dread the terrestrial authorities employed to watch them, that they return not to their pagan habits, after the trouble it has cost them to make them abandon them. When a Tcheremisse falls sick, one of his relations fetches the *Moujedesch*, a

kind of magician, who makes a number of conjurations, and designates the animal they are to sacrifice to Keremet. When the sick person is rich, a chicken, a duck, and a goose are usually immolated; and the Moujedesch seldom omits to proclaim that God likewise requires a lamb, as the skin of the victim always falls to his share. The animal designated is led to the forest and there sacrificed. The more serious the illness happens to be, the greater are the tortures the poor animal endures before they quite kill it. The flesh of the victim is always cooked afterwards, and eaten, accompanied with a great many prayers, and the remains are burned.

If some public calamity befalls a village,—as, for example, if a man is killed by accident, or horses happen to be stolen, and they are obliged to have recourse to the police of the district, a measure greatly dreaded by the Tcheremisse,—in such a case they all subscribe, and buy a cow or a horse, and immolate it to Keremet, in the name of all the inhabitants. This sacrifice is made with great pomp, and all the men are obliged to assist at it. They make the victim undergo a thousand tortures, and afterwards devour it with a religious eagerness. Similar sacrifices are offered when any epidemic disease reigns among them, and the greater the evil, the more cruelly they torment the animal. It is for this reason that the authorities watch them

scrupulously, in order, if possible, to prevent these sacrifices ; for they have every reason to believe that the habit of assisting at these bloody and cruel scenes exerts a pernicious influence upon their morals. The following are the names of their principal divinities :—1, *Hiane Iouma*, the greatest of all their Gods ; 2, *Iouma Abaja*, the Mother of God ; 3, *Kougoujan Iouma*, the Emperor's God ; 4, *Kougoujan Iouma Abaja*, the God of the Emperor's mother ; 5, *Kaba Iouma*, God's greatest Saint ; 6, *Tuna Iouma*, the God of the Universe ; 7, *Mordej one*, the God of the Mind ; 8, *Molanda Aba*, the Mother of the Earth ; 9, *Ketscha one*, the God of the Sun ; 10, *Tellscha one*, the God of Bees ; 11, *Vud one*, the God of Water.

The Tcheremisse never willingly confide the mysteries of their religion to the Russians ; and if a man through curiosity strives to gain any information, he is looked upon immediately as an agent of the authorities, who seeks to know their secrets, merely to have an opportunity of persecuting them. It is necessary therefore to insinuate oneself into their confidence, in order to gain any information from them. Those, particularly, who profess themselves Christians, but at the same time are secretly attached to their old habits, are greatly afraid of being convicted of Paganism. I am sure that no converted Tcheremisse would ever be induced to divulge the secrets of his former rites, at least if

he were sober : it is only by making them drink that you can render them indiscreet.

## V.

When we compare the two subdivisions of the Tcheremisse,—those of the mountains, and of the plains,—it is difficult to believe that these two different types of men ever belonged to the same race ; notwithstanding, it is quite evident they both sprang from the same origin, and are one and the same tribe, professing the same religion, speaking the same language, and having almost the same customs ; the Volga alone separating the two countries. It is also an incontestable fact, that the Tcheremisse of the mountains crossed the river, and established themselves on the right bank, having inhabited, before that period, the same country as their brethren of the plains. The Tcheremisse of the mountains are, as is usually the case with mountaineers, tall, slender, and well made ; they have expressive countenances, and possess a certain degree of beauty ; their hair is jet black, as also their eyes ; if you enter their houses, built after the manner of the Russians, what an air of comfort and cleanliness you find ! The women are models of order, neatness, and activity, and nature has been as favourable to them as towards the men ; I have met with real beauties amongst them. In their households you find an abundance of all that can

render the life of a peasant happy and cheerful. The costume of the mountaineers is the same as that of the Tchouvash, with the exception of the kaftan, which is made of grey or white cloth, the seams ornamented with black gimp. The woollen stuff which envelopes their feet is also black ; they wear the same shoes made of bark, the *lapty* of the Russians. From being so much in contact with the latter, the Tcheremisse of the mountains have lost all resemblance to their fellow-countrymen on the opposite side of the Volga : their manner of living is quite different, their language has deviated somewhat from the original tongue, for they have some difficulty in understanding each other. Active and fond of agriculture, they are very independent, and indeed many Russian peasants in the neighbourhood have not half the comforts they possess. Their villages are very like those of the Tchouvash, built without order or regularity. The houses are separated by large yards, where they keep all their farming implements. They have generally two houses in the same yard,—one containing a good stove, with a chimney and four or six pretty windows, with panes of glass ; the other is destined for household work, and has an oven without any chimney ; during the severe weather they also put there the young of their different beasts, of which they possess large quantities. Their gardens are well cultivated, and produce an abundance of vegetables of

all kinds,—cabbages, radishes, potatoes, carrots, and onions. The men are in general healthy, robust, and above the middle height. Those who become soldiers are usually chosen for the *corps d'élite*; the Tcheremissé of the plains, and the Tchouvash, on the contrary, have great difficulty in furnishing their contingent of men who have attained the height required by the law.

It is however but fair to say, that both the Tcheremissé and Tchouvash make excellent soldiers, and you never hear of a deserter amongst them. There are many individuals amongst the Tcheremissé of the mountains who are very wealthy for peasants: on one occasion, when a fire broke out, one of them lost as much as two thousand roubles' worth of corn that was burned, and about the same sum in bank-notes. Many of them not having sufficient land of their own, rent more on lease, which they cultivate, and derive thereby considerable advantages. The rich lend the poor money to pay their taxes, and they return them corn in exchange, of which they amass great quantities, and keep for a time of famine, or when corn is high, they sell it, and by this means gain large sums of money. However rich they become, their manner of living is always the same. You never find any poor amongst them; there is no outward distinction between those who possess thousands of roubles, and the man who has not a penny.

## VI.

The female costume is much the same as that worn by the Tchouvash women, and consists in a long chemise, the sleeves and body embroidered in wool of various colours, and fastened round the waist by a band made of hemp, from which hangs behind a large tassel of wool. On their shoulders they wear a large riband, covered with small coins and shells. The head is enveloped in a *scharpan*, a large piece of linen embroidered, which goes over their head and neck, and fastens under the chin, leaving visible only the face and fore part of the head. Instead of ear-rings they wear half-circles made of copper: this last ornament is only worn by the married women. Their feet are enveloped in quantities of woollen material, the same as with the Tchouvash: the more wealthy a Tcheremisse happens to be, the thicker his legs must appear. In winter the women wear precisely the same dress as the men, and it is difficult to distinguish them at first sight. The only difference between the female costume of the Tcheremisse women of the mountains and that of the plains is, the latter leave their heads uncovered, and wear their hair in long plaits hanging behind. The *scharpan* envelopes the neck only.

The Tcheremisse weddings are much the same as those of the Tchouvash. The ceremonies differ

slightly, and these differences vary in many villages, which have each their separate customs. The whole of the ceremony however presents much the same character, accompanied with a number of superstitious practices, and a terrible noise and confusion, caused principally by the indefatigable bag-pipe and violin players, and the criers, young men of seventeen and eighteen years of age, who are paid for accompanying the music with the most savage yells and vociferations. The weddings usually terminate in debauchery. The general intoxication of the company, the yells of the criers, the loud beating of an immense drum, and the deafening clamour of the infernal music, all contribute to render the scene frightful in the extreme, and causes the most bitter reflections on the depravity of this people. It is generally remarked that the Tcheremisse are in the habit of marrying their sons very young, and their daughters never before they have attained their twenty-fifth year, which accounts for the number of men you meet with in the prime of life whose wives are old and shrivelled, and often infirm. This custom is no doubt also the cause of the small increase of this people.

## VII.

The *Aga Priam* (the Feast of Husbandry) is the same as the *Saban* with the Tartars. It is gene-

rally celebrated in the spring, with the intention of drawing down the blessing of God on the newly-cultivated land. They assemble in a field, and bring with them all kinds of provisions, with the exception of animal flesh, which is prohibited ; two large fires are lighted, one for the men, and the other for the women. In their religious ceremonies they seldom admit the women, excepting at this one, when they are allowed to remain at a distance, but not to take part in the prayers, which the men repeat, in a low voice, after the Kart, who reads them aloud. As long as the ceremony lasts, the women are obliged to remain around the fire that has been lighted for them. At the arrival of the Kart, who performs the functions of high-priest, they all rise out of respect, and an old man goes to the fire and lights a taper, which he presents to the Kart, who afterwards lights a number of others placed above vases made of the bark of trees, and wooden vessels that contain the provisions, and beer they bring with them for the feast. When all the candles are lighted, the Kart begins with a prayer to Iouma, that he will grant them an abundant harvest. The men remain on their knees during the prayer, and when the Kart himself kneels down, they fall prostrate with their faces to the earth. After the prayer is over, they then proceed to the blessing of the provisions, which is done in the following manner.

The Kart takes a portion of each different kind of food, and of the beer, putting it all into a large basin, and after consecrating the omelets to the Mother of Iouma, the salmas to the God of Thunder, and the various cakes to the prophets of the different gods, etc., he throws this mixture of aliments into one of the fires, reciting prayers the while. The Tcheremisse then prostrate themselves on the ground, and do not rise until all is consumed. After this, the Kart tastes a portion of the different provisions and liquors, and receives a share from each individual of eggs and other things ; during this ceremony, the Kart is followed by an old man, who strikes a light each time the priest tastes the food. After this performance is over they begin to eat the blessed provisions, and the women have permission to share in the feasting. The crumbs are afterwards swept up by the Kart, and thrown into the fire, and the ceremony terminates by a prayer and prostrations as at the commencement. The festival is then kept up in the different villages, where they return to feast. The only pleasures of this people consist in eating and drinking.

The great festival of the Tcheremisse is the Sourem ; it is kept in the latter part of the month of June, and is dedicated to Iouma, their principal god. Several parishes unite to celebrate this festival ; for this reason, they send word some days previously to those of the same religion to assemble

in the centre of the forest, where the sacrifices are offered. On the day appointed, each person cleanses himself in a bath, and clothes himself in white linen, putting on a kaftan of the same material before repairing to the sacred spot. The women are strictly forbidden to appear, and the festival is considered so holy that no Tchereinisso dares take a pinch of snuff or smoke a pipe during the three days it lasts, which is a great privation.

They make use of the same ceremonies as the Tchouvash, with regard to the sacrifices and the manner of buying and proving the victims, to see if they are worthy of being immolated. The prayer addressed to Iouma on the occasion is extremely simple ; the following is a translation of it.

“Iouma, bestow your favours on him who offers sacrifices to you, and do not refuse him health and salvation.

“To infants grant the happiness of possessing corn, money, cattle, and bees.

“Grant that the bees may swarm each year, and produce an abundance of honey.

“Grant that we may have good sport in hunting and shooting.

“Grant us also plenty of gold and silver.

“Help us also, mighty Iouma, to sell our merchandise for three times more than it is worth.

“Grant that we may be fortunate enough to have our share in the goods of this life.

“Help us, mighty Iouma, to pay our taxes to the Tzar.

"When the God of Spring shall reign, allow us to drive our cattle over three roads; preserve them from the mud, bears, wolves, and thieves.

"Grant that the skins of our cattle may be good.

"Grant that we may sell our cattle with one hand and receive the price with the other. Send us, louma, an honest man for a friend.

"In our journeys preserve us, great Iouma, from sickness, wicked men, fools, judges, quarrellers, and detractors.

"Grant, great God, that we may be as wise and happy as the hop-plant is fresh and bushy.

"Grant that we may enjoy good health, as a taper burns brightly.

"Grant that we may give abundant alms to those who demand them."

There is a patriarchal simplicity in this prayer, which would not be misplaced in a Christian temple.

The ceremonies of the Sourem last three days, and it is forbidden for any one to sleep during the night. All that is not eaten is afterwards thrown into the fire. It is the only festival at which they do not become intoxicated, for they are not allowed to bring with them either beer or any other liquor. During these three days the Tcheremisse make frequent ablutions, and bathe continually.

After all the ceremonies of the Sourem are over the Kart fixes a day for the exorcism or adjuration of the Devil. On this day both men and women assemble in a plain; the young men drive a covered

carriage, drawn by two or three horses, and some on horseback : each one has a kind of flute or flageolet, made from a branch of the lime-tree, ornamented with bark of trees of various colours ; these instruments are used only at the festival of the Sourem. The women and girls bring all kinds of cakes, which they offer to the men. When the carriages approach the crowd of women they are all eager to obtain a seat, and they set off and gallop round the course several times. In the evening, and sometimes the following day, they proceed to expel Schaytan. All the young men on horseback scour the villages, enter all the yards, making the most infernal noise. In order to banish the Devil they rend the air with savage yells, striking the walls with sticks and various instruments. They also go into the houses, enter all the corners, to banish Schaytan. The master of the house testifies his gratitude by presenting them provisions and sometimes money.

I will finish this chapter, and the account of this people, by a short description of the ceremonies of All Souls' Day. The commemoration takes place in each family at the anniversary of the death of any of the members. \*

Two Karts preside at the ceremony, which commences with a sacrifice of two sheep and several fowls for the soul of the deceased. No person dares approach this larder destined for the dead. All

the friends of the deceased assemble in his house, where are lighted as many candles as there are individuals in the family who have departed this life. They then begin to eat and drink. The Karts afterwards put on the clothes of the deceased persons, which are kept expressly for that purpose, and, taking a candle in each hand, begin to dance ; the relations then follow their example, and this choreographical exercise lasts several hours. After this they put the remains of the food they have eaten into a wooden porringer. The Kart carries it into the yard, and calls the dogs belonging to the house, who regale themselves with the fragments ; whilst they are devouring it the other Kart shakes over them the clothes of the dead. If the dogs eat with great avidity, which is always the case, it is supposed the offering has been acceptable to the soul of the deceased, and they give themselves up to a universal joy, which terminates in a general and disgusting intoxication,—a custom practised at all their festivals by these lovers of drunkenness.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE MORDVA RACE.

**THE MORDVAS.—THEIR ORIGIN.—DRESS, AND MODE OF LIVING.  
—MARRIAGES.—DIVINITIES, RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, AND SUPERSTITIONS.**

ANOTHER race of men, found in considerable numbers in the Province of Kazan, are the *Mordvas*, commonly called *Mordvins*, and who are still Pagans.

This race was, in former days, powerful and wealthy. It had its own Khans and princes, but lost both when it fell under the Tartar dominion. Besides forming a portion of the population of Kazan, the Mordvas exist in great numbers in the Provinces of Nijney and Orenburg.

The Mordva race is supposed to be of Finnish origin, as likewise their language, with which the Tartar is however much mixed up.

In bodily form and personal appearance the Mordvas bear a greater resemblance to the Russians than to their other neighbours, the Tchouvash

and Tcheremisse. In their mode of living, likewise, they bear more affinity to the former. Their faces are generally long and thin, their hair is of a reddish colour, and their beards short and scanty. They are honest and industrious, but, like the Tchouvash, slow and dilatory in their movements. In many respects they imitate partly the Russians and partly the Tartars; but they differ from the latter in their extreme want of cleanliness, and in their use of the flesh of swine, which it is well known both the Tartars, and almost all other Pagan races, look upon with aversion.

The Mordvas, like the Tchouvash, have an extreme repugnance to any intercourse with other races, and, to avoid their contact as much as possible, they build their villages in the midst of a forest or wood. Their principal means of living is derived from agriculture, farming, the chase, and the training of bees.

Their dress moreover bears a very great resemblance to that of the Russian peasant, in all save the shirt, which has a large wide collar, embroidered with silk. The dress of the women has a very original and peculiar appearance. Their robe resembles that of the Tchouvash: it is made of white linen, embroidered with silk cords of different colours. Around their waist is attached a very wide scarf, adorned with a multitude of tassels and fringes, and over this again they place a kind of apron,

which hangs half-way down to the knees, and which is as much an object of decency as ornament, for their robe almost adheres to their bodies, and is in fact, in summer at least, their only article of clothing.

When a Mordva woman is in her holiday attire, she adds to her costume a variety of ornaments, fringes, tassels, etc., and puts around her neck a species of kerchief, of network, to which is attached a multitude of imitation coins and coral beads. Each of her fingers are covered with silver or brass rings, and she fixes to her ear-rings numerous beads and silver ornaments, which fall down to her shoulders, making, as she moves, a jingling sound, extremely pleasing to the ears of the Tchouvash fair ones. Her hair is plaited in several long tresses, which hang almost down to her heels; and if her own hair does not suffice for the purpose, she adds black sheep's wool, to produce the required length and number of tresses. The married women are not allowed to wear their hair in the manner we have just described, but hide it under a species of hat, which differs somewhat in shape and size from that worn by the unmarried portion of the sex.

As is the custom with various other races in Russia, the accouchement of the women takes place in the bath, and here, likewise, they subsequently receive their acquaintances, who come to congratulate them on their safe delivery. As is the case

among the Tcheremisse, the first man who enters the bath gives his name to the child, if it be a boy, and the first woman her name, if it be a girl.

The most common male names of the Mordvas are Trena, Kazaï, Betkoub, Tchidass, etc.; Lopai (pronounced *lop eye!*), Rackas (pronounced *rack us!*), Schinda, Loumzour, are some of the female names most heard in their villages.

The Mordva women, like the Tartars, are bought by their husbands. The kalym paid by the latter is from eight to ten roubles (about eight shillings)! This sum being paid, the father of the bridegroom goes to the house of his son's intended; the maiden is then confided to his care, and returns with him alone to his abode. On arriving, she takes her seat beside her future husband at a table; but previous to this, urged by a most becoming feeling of modesty and maiden timidity, she covers her face with a handkerchief. On the table is placed a pasty, three or four feet long; this the father of the bridegroom pushes towards the maiden, saying, "Let the light of day shine on you!" and he adds, "May you be happy, and may corn and children be yours in abundance!" The maiden having removed her veil, now for the first time beholds her intended, who, clasping her in his arms, hugs and kisses her to his heart's content. Then begins the feast, with dancing, singing, and drinking of beer. When the nuptial hour arrives, the bride is led to her husband

by an old woman, who says, “Wolf! here is a lamb for you!” and, judging from the manner in which the maiden plays her part, she really does look upon her husband as a kind of wolf, for she weeps, screams, stamps, and runs away, and is only led back by force to his embraces. In former times, the Mordvas were wont to affiance their children in their infancy, and, as a mark of the engagement then made, the fathers exchanged their tobacco-pipes. The maidens thus betrothed were not bound by the contract; but in case the youth desired to break off the engagement, he was bound to pay the fair one he abandoned a few roubles by way of compensation.

The Mordvas are allowed by their Pagan laws to have several wives, but they seldom avail themselves of the liberty, being generally content with one.

When the wife of a Mordva dies, his greatest delight is to marry his wife’s sister; and if he chances to be refused, this is how he acts on the occasion: he goes to the house of her relations, and throwing on the table a small loaf of bread, he bawls out, “Sell me my sister-in-law!” Having said this, he runs away, pursued by the father and male relatives of the fair object of his desires; and woe betide him if he be caught!—they beat him in such a case most unmercifully. If they strive in vain to catch him, and give up the chase, they call out, “Come back, you have gained the prize;” and the happy bride-

groom, who owes to the swiftness of his legs his unutterable bliss, returns with his pursuers to their home, and takes possession of the woman, to gain whom he exposed himself to such great danger.

As is the case with the Tchouvash, the Mordvas bury their dead in their best attire, place food and beer in the coffin, and leave a little of both in the grave.

A portion of the Mordva race, like the Tchouvash and Tcheremisse, bear the name of Christians ; but there is reason to fear that too generally they are Christians in name alone. With regard to that portion who have still remained Pagans, the following are some of their practices and customs.

Their chief God they call Paass, or Pass,—a word which in their language signifies likewise *heaven*. The Mother of God, and the Son of God, they call Enitchy Pass ; these, they suppose, live in the sky. They have however a God who lives, as they imagine, in the bowels of the earth, and a wicked God they look upon him to be; they call him Master Pass. They have a fourth God, whom they value much, namely, Nickolai Pass : this divinity is doubtless St. Nicholas, the Patron Saint of the Russians; as a homage to this divinity, they are wont to go during days of trouble into the Russian churches, where they buy a wax candle, and place it before the image of the Saint.

Their mode of prayer, their sacrifices, and festi-

vals, so nearly resemble those of the Tchouvash, that it is unnecessary to describe them; but in their sacrifices they differ in one respect, namely, that they do not burn any portion of the slaughtered animal, but make a hole in the ground, in which they put the horns, bones, skin, and other parts of the victim, and in which they pour likewise its blood. They afterwards fill up the hole with earth, and arrange the spot in the greatest order, a task accompanied by certain prayers and ceremonies.

I forgot to mention that they have their Keremet, like the Tchouvash, and Keremet's wife to boot; both of these wicked powers they fear no less than their neighbours.

Keremet has likewise a *fête*, during which they offer him in sacrifice a variety of victims. Besides this, they have a *field fête*, at which both sexes assist; a *fête* called Pass Atchousky, at which they slaughter a brown cow; and one for Master Pass, to whom a black cow is offered up as a victim. The *Fête* of the Sun, called Tchi Pass, is celebrated at home, by feasting and merry-makings. In the autumn they offer to the God Tourtchashou Pass a domestic sacrifice, begging him to send them a propitious winter. When they see the new moon for the first time, they bow down to the earth, and solicit,—the man or her ladyship in the moon?—to send them happiness, as long as he or she condescends to shine upon the earth.

On great Christian holidays, such as Christmas-day, Easter, etc., they offer up sacrifices to the God of the Russians, and the Russian saints, in order to have a share in the blessings which their Christian neighbours enjoy.

They fear thunder and lightning very much, and during a storm they constantly repeat the following prayer :—“Take pity on us, O great God Pourgeney !” (the God of storms).

All their prayers and movements, at these different *fêtes*, are very like those of the Tchouvash ; their modes of prostration on the earth they have borrowed from the Tartars.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE VOTIACK RACE.

THE VOTIACKS.—THEIR ORIGIN, CHARACTER, AND MODE OF LIVING.—MARRIAGES AND FUNERALS.—GODS, PRIESTS, AND MAGICIANS.

A *Sixth Race*, of whom we have now to speak, and which once played no mean part in the history of the land we are describing,—though its power, its princes, nobles, and every vestige of its importance have passed away,—are the people commonly called Votiacks. This is not however their proper name, for they call themselves Morti, a word which in their language signifies “men.”

The portion of Kazan which they inhabit they call Kam Kozeen, or “the land lying between two rivers,” namely, the Kama and the Viatka.

If we take into consideration its numbers, this race still possesses a certain importance, for it consists of more than forty thousand men alone, including that portion which is to be found in the provinces of Viatka and Orenburg.

A great portion of this race of men still clings to the dark errors of Paganism. That part which has nominally become Christians, mingle in their religious practices a great many of the superstitious forms of their ancestors ; and, on the other hand, the Pagan portion of the Votiacks have adopted all that pleased them in the Christian faith. We shall speak in the following notice principally of the former.

Like their neighbours, the Votiacks were long under the Tartar yoke, and were doubtless at first a wandering horde ; but when the Russians took possession of the country, they gave up their vagabond mode of life, built themselves villages, and devoted their attention to the cultivation of the soil.

In their physical form, the men are generally middle-sized and thin, resembling more the Finns, from whom they descend, than any of their neighbours. In their moral character, they are honest, peaceful, hospitable, sober, simple-hearted, but superstitious in the extreme. The women are not favoured by nature as regards their personal appearance ; they are still shorter in stature than the men, and have exceedingly small eyes, which gives them a displeasing look ; but to make amends for their want of beauty, they are modest, timid, and virtuous, and at the same time industrious and skilled in several kinds of handicraft.

To a still greater degree than their neighbours, the Votiacks avoid all intercourse with other races, and for this purpose they never live in towns, but build their villages in the most retired spots they can find. Their houses, style of living, etc., resemble so closely those of the Tchouvash and the Tcheremissc, that I shall not stop to describe them here.

They are particularly fond of the chase, and make use of the bow and arrow, and fire-arms, with equal skill. They wage a constant war with wild beasts, particularly with bears and wolves, whose skins they turn to account as articles of clothing. The women spin, make linen and a coarse kind of cloth, and are skilful in embroidery. There are no poor to be found among them, and, on the other hand, there are few or none that can boast of being rich ; in fact, to have a greater quantity of land, and a few more horses and oxen, is the only distinction between the wealthy and the poorer peasants. They all dress alike, eat the same food, and in general their houses are built of the same size, and with the same interior arrangements.

The dress of the male Votiack is almost the same as that of the Russian peasant, and is generally made of coarse white cloth, fabricated by their wives. Around the waist they wear a scarf or belt, to which they attach a large knife and a hatchet.

The women's dress has its peculiarities. They

wear their gown (their only article of clothing, by the bye, in the summer season) very short ; this is skilfully and fantastically embroidered with silk. Over this occasionally they wear a species of spencer, likewise worked with silk cord, and made with long sleeves, which hang dangling down to their knees. Their head-dress consists of a high stiff cap, over which they throw a handkerchief adorned with fringe, which falls over their shoulders and back. Their faces remain uncovered. On their fingers they wear a multitude of rings, and two and sometimes three brass and iron bracelets on their arms. Their feet and legs are enveloped in strips of cloth, which makes them so thick that they are hideous to look at. Their shoes are the Russian *laptyi*, or sandals made of the bark of trees. In general, the married women dress better and more gaudily than the unmarried ones.

According to their Pagan laws, the Votiacks are allowed to have as many wives as they can support ; however, it seldom happens that they have more than two, and in general they content themselves with one. Like their neighbours, they *buy* their wives, and the kalym they pay is called *Airdoun* ; the bargaining part of the business they name *Erashou*. The price they give for their “better half” is from five to fifteen roubles (from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 14*s.*)

The *airdoun* being paid, the bridegroom without

delay takes the fair object of his choice with him to his home; her face however is covered with a large thick shawl. Then assemble the parents, relations, and friends of both parties, during which time the bride decks herself in her marriage attire in a separate room. When she is ready she takes her place (her head still covered) at the door of the cottage, and waits till the *Tor Kart* (literally, “the man of God”), their priest, makes his appearance. The latter comes, and by way of a grave and mysterious marriage ceremony, hands round to each of the guests a glass of beer! which being religiously quaffed by all, is followed by a general prayer that *Tora* (God) would send the young couple plenty of corn, children, and riches. The maiden’s veil is now taken off, and she first presents to her husband a glass of beer or hydromel, and then to each of the guests in succession. While doing this, she goes upon her knees; nor does she rise till the goblet is emptied, a feat which is done, I need not say, both willingly and speedily. After this begins the “fun and frolic” that usually accompany these ceremonies, at which the guests eat and drink till they can eat and drink no more.

With the Votiacks, as with the Tcheremisse, it often happens, that when a suitor is refused, he runs away with the fair maiden he seeks to call his wife. For this purpose he gathers together his comrades, and during the night breaks into the house, seizes

the maiden in bed, sets her on horseback, and carries her away to his home. It however also happens that the parents have been previously informed of the intention, and have taken their measures to prevent its accomplishment; in these cases a terrible scuffle ensues. If the ravisher be successful, the parents in general put up quietly with the loss, and on ascertaining where their daughter is they make peace with the violator of their domestic roof, receive the money for their stolen child, and the marriage is then celebrated in due form with the ordinary festivities.

The funerals of the Votiacks resemble much those of the Tchouvash. They wash the body, dress the deceased in his best attire, and after this, as a mark of grief, they break the point of the knives they carry at their belt. After the Russian form, a lighted wax candle is placed at the feet of the deceased. When the corpse is carried to the grave, it is placed between two planks, to which are attached a hatchet, a knife, some articles of clothing, food, and other objects, which the Votiacks consider to be most needed in the other world. When the grave is filled up, they light several wax tapers, and scatter over the tomb three hard-boiled eggs, cut into small pieces; while they are doing this they exclaim, "Take that! poor soul; it will be useful to thee." On their return home, they light a wood fire in the yard of the deceased, rub their

hands in the ashes, wash themselves, change their clothes, and then set to eating and drinking to soothe their sorrow.

On the third day they commemorate the death of their relations by a feast, given in the house where he died. A part of the food they carry to the grave, saying as before, "There, take that! it will do you good." They suppose, like the Tchouvash, that this food is eaten by the deceased; but it becomes the spoil of dogs, to which a Votiack funeral is a rare treat. On the seventh day after the burial, they immolate an ox or horse on the grave; here they cook the flesh and eat of the soup, taking care to leave the deceased his due portion of the repast. A general *fête* of the dead takes place on Thursday in Holy Week; the burial-ground on that day is crowded with visitors,—men, women, and children,—each burning a wax candle, and eating a pie or some other food they bring with them.

From this it will be seen how ignorant, credulous, and superstitious are the Votiacks. Some of their superstitions we will here mention.

1. They look upon Wednesday and Friday as unlucky days, on which nothing should be undertaken.

2. If a crow or a cuckoo alights on the roof of their house, or if a hedgehog is seen by any one running along, this is supposed to be the sign of death or severe sickness.

3. The man who kills a swallow or a pigeon will never, they believe, have any luck with his cattle or poultry.

4. They believe that a bear that has been wounded by a hunter, yet has managed to escape, can always recognize his foe, and will endeavour to revenge the injury received.

5. If a tree be struck by lightning, they say that the devil who lived in it has been killed.

6. They consider it unlucky to sell the wax formed by their bees, or to remove it from the house.

7. When an eclipse of the sun or the moon takes place, they say that one of their *oubirs* (a race of wicked enchanters, of whom we shall speak hereafter) has run against these heavenly bodies in one of their excursions.

8. Barrenness, in various ways, is owing, they say, to the Christian Votiacks, who offer up no sacrifices to their gods; for they believe, that offerings are far more profitable than prayers.

9. When a Votiack passes over the water, he takes care to throw into the stream a handful of grass, saying as he does this, "Water, do not stop me!"

Such are a few of the many superstitious notions of this people.

With regard to their religious belief, they have a multitude of gods, the principal of whom they call *Inmar*, whose place of habitation is the sun.

They believe that Inmar has a mother, whom they call *Moukaltzin*, and on whom depends the fruitfulness of the earth, men, and cattle.

To the sun they also give a mother, named *Shounda Mouma*, who has also the honour of being the parent of several other of their pagan divinities.

They have moreover a multitude of maleficent divinitics, the principal of whom is named *Shaitan*, a name they have evidently borrowed from the Christians, and which is meant for Satan. This god they believe inhabits the water, and for this reason they call him likewise the *Bou Mourt*, or the "water-inan." Another of these mischievous powers they name *Pallas Mourt*, or the "forest-man;" like the satyrs of the Romans, this god is half man half beast; he possesses only one leg, and that is turned inside out; like Polyphemus, he has but one eye; and he is thought to possess an enormous dug, which he thrusts by force into the mouths of mortals, and thereby suffocates them.

*Albast* they suppose to be an evil spirit, a kind of gnome, who haunts their houses, barns, and baths; this elf plays them all sorts of mischievous tricks, sets fire to their houses, drives their cattle mad, etc. etc.

Their *Oubirs*, of whom we made mention, are powerful enchanters, who have at their command the evil spirits, and can do what they like with poor mortals against whom they chance to have a spite.

With regard to the state of man after death, they believe it to be of two kinds. The first, a state of happiness, which they call *Dounia Touggit*, unites all the blessings that a Votiack could wish for upon earth,—riches, power, fair women, good eating and drinking, etc. The second, a state of misery, (*Kouratseen Intee*) is filled with cauldrons of boiling pitch, in which the wicked suffer for the sins they have committed.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE RUINS OF BOLGARY, AND THE ANCIENT BOLGARS.

1. THE GREAT CITY.—II. A VOYAGE ON THE VOLGA.—III. THE GREAT TOWER OF BOLGARY, AND ITS VICINITY.—IV. THE MUS-SULMAN MOSQUE AND CHRISTIAN TEMPLE.—V. THE WHITE PALACE.—VI. THE BLACK PALACE, OR JUDGMENT HALL.—VII. THE SMALL COLUMN, AND ITS VICINITY.—VIII. ILLUSTREIOUS VISITS TO BOLGARY.—IX. ANCIENT POSITION OF BOLGARY.—X. ANTIQUITIES OF BOLGARY.—XI. THE ANCIENT BOLGARS.—XII. DOWNFALL OF THE BOLGARS.—XIII. DESTRUCTION OF BOLGARY.

#### I.

IN the province of Kazan, on the left bank of the river Volga, and at about six miles' distance from that majestic stream, are situated the ruins of a city, formerly the capital of a rich and powerful empire, which, by an inscrutable decree of Providence, has been swept away from the face of the earth, leaving scarce a vestige to attest its existence save the rude fragments of stone which rise from the scene of its desolation, and which would seem to have been spared by time to serve as a warning

and a lesson to other nations, that in the pride of their prosperity little imagine how near may be the doom which will hurl them into the dust of ruin and oblivion.

The ruins to which we allude are those of BOLGARY, the capital of the once flourishing nation known by the name of the BOIGARS, which, we are assured, at the period of its prosperity, might have rivalled with ancient Palmyra, Troy, Carthage, Tyre, and other proud cities which have left no trace behind them, and whose fate it has likewise shared. Towns, population, power, riches,—all have been annihilated, all have disappeared.

Like that of numerous other Asiatic nations which poured like a torrent into Europe during the Middle Ages, the history of the people is involved in the deepest obscurity, and the little we know rests rather on conjecture than on authentic records. In the Russian annals, whatever mention is made of Bolgary relates solely to the sanguinary contests in which these two nations were incessantly engaged; not the slightest allusion to the customs, manners, language, or social organization of the Bolgars is to be found therein. The Tartar chronicles are still more barren in this respect than even the Russian; and the little they relate is so mixed up with fable and fiction, that no reliance whatever can be placed on their contents. It is only from the writings of a few ancient Arab travellers

who visited Bolgary, that we are enabled to extract a scanty yet credible information concerning this people, whose opulence and mode of living excited so strongly their wonder and admiration. It is to these same writers, likewise, that we are indebted for the little we know concerning this ancient capital, which we find in the Greek annals designated by the name of "The Great City," and in the Russian by that of "The Renowned City," and whose extent and importance may be imagined from the fact of its having contained within its ramparts at the period of its destruction upwards of ten thousand buildings.

It is evident that the Bolgars were at first a vagabond tribe. At what time they gave up their errant mode of existence, and turned to building towns and habitations, no certain conjecture can be formed ; we know, however, that their capital can boast of exceeding antiquity. Mukhammed Homery, who lived at the close of the eighth century, informs us that Bolgary presented even at that period a flourishing aspect. But who was its founder ? This is a question to which no answer has yet been given. It is true the Tartar chronicles attribute its foundation to Kassir Shah of Samarcand ; but the fables and anachronisms with which they are filled render it impossible to draw any just conclusion from their contents. The method in which they describe the foundation of this city

will give the reader an idea of their character. ‘The town of Bolgary,’ these records inform us, “was built by Kassir Shah of Samarcand, who lived ninety years in the faith of Christ. He left behind him a son, Socrates the Wise, who received the direction of the horde of Younan, and who, together with Iskander Roumel\*, chose a wife from among the Bolgars. Both lived about ten months in Bolgary, and then set out with their wives for Diarr Dalmatia. The wise Socrates, dying, left after him a son, whose name is unknown.”

The first notice relative to the town of Bolgary on which we can place any certain reliance is derived from the writings of Ibn Fozlan, who was sent thither by the Caliph of Bagdad in the tenth century, and who has left us several interesting memorials of the manners and customs of this people, to which we shall refer hereafter. From him we learn that Bolgary had attained to a degree of prosperity and luxury which struck with wonder both himself and his companions.

We learn, at a later period, from Zacharia ben Mahommed, surnamed Kazwini, “that the town of Bolgary had acquired vast celebrity, partly because it was the capital of the mighty empire to which it belonged, and partly because it was in this town

\* This Iskander Roumel, with whose name the Tartars have thought fit to decorate the Bolgar history, is no less a personage than Alexander the Great.

that the innumerable barks, which came hither for purposes of commerce, cast anchor\*.”

Ibn Hawkal, a writer of the tenth century, speaking of Bolgary, says:—“ It is a vast and flourishing town, whose riches I will not describe, lest I should be accused of falsehood.” These words of Ibn Hawkal prove how far the splendour and riches of Bolgary surpassed the expectations of the Arab travellers who visited this city.

Abdullah Yacouti, who wrote in the thirteenth century, describes the town of Bolgary in the following manner :—“ This city,” says he, “ is built of fir ; its walls and fortifications are of oak ; it is surrounded on every side by the Turks† ; between this town and Constantinople the distance requires a two months’ journey. The Bolgars are engaged in an unceasing war with Constantinople. With them the day lasts but four hours‡ ; the remaining

\* Bolgary was built, as we have before remarked, on the banks of the river Volga.

† The word *Turk* among the Arabs was as vague as the word *Scythian* among the Greeks ; it was indiscriminately applied to the Tartars, the Tcheremisse, the Morduins, and other tribes.

‡ Ibn Hawkal asserts the same fact, and says, “ that in Bolgary the day in winter is of such brief duration, as scarcely to suffice for the reading of the four solemn daily prayers, and the performance of the ceremonies which accompany them.” These accounts are less exaggerated than might be supposed ; for the author can testify that often in winter, at nine o’clock in the morning, in these climes, daylight can scarcely be said to exist and at three in the afternoon the inhabitants have generally recourse to candlelight.

twenty form the night. This country is very cold; during the long winter the earth is covered with deep snow. It is said that this nation derives its origin from the posterity of those who believed in the prediction of Houd, and who retired to the north, where they fixed their abode. In the earth are found teeth resembling those of the elephant, and which are white as ivory ”

Another Arab writer, Ibn Batuta, whose travels through Tartary, made in the year 1324-5, have been translated by the Rev. Samuel Lee, and published by the Oriental Translation Committee in London, alludes thus to Bolgary :—“ I had formerly heard much of the city of *Bulgar* (Bolgary), and hence I conceived a desire to see it, and to observe whether what had been related of it, as to the extreme shortness of its nights, and again of its days, in the opposite season of the year, were true or not. There was however between that place and the camp of the Sultan a distance of ten days ; I requested the Sultan therefore that he would appoint some one who would bring me thither and back, which he granted. I remained at Bolgary three days, and then returned to the King.” Is it not strange that Ibn Batuta should have made no further mention of Bolgary than the lines we have quoted ?

Izmail Abdoul Feda, the reigning prince of Hamat, born in Damascus in the year 1273, and

who died at Hamat in 1331, says that Bioular, called by the Arabs Boulgar, is a town situated in the most remote habitable country of the north, not far from the river Atel\*, and on the same bank as Sarai. Between these two towns the distance requires a journey of twenty days. "Bioular," he continues, "is situated in a valley; rich baths are found there; but there is no fruit of any description, for the trees, in consequence of the excessive cold, never take root, and still less the vine. The inhabitants belong to the Mahometan faith, of the Hanefid persuasion."

Such is the brief passing mention which ancient writers have left us concerning the city of Bolgary. Scanty as it is, it is valuable, for it is all we possess,—at least, it is all that has yet been gathered from out the darkness which envelopes the history of this town and of the nation to which it belonged. That there still remains much to be discovered, is beyond the shadow of a doubt; and it is to be hoped that the day is not far remote when this subject will be duly and thoroughly investigated by archæologists competent to the task. Hitherto the researches of the learned have been rare and unsatisfactory. Whatever has been written in modern times con-

\* The river Volga was called by the Arabs and by other Eastern travellers who came thither, Atel, or Itel, a word which signifies "dog," a designation which it is supposed to have received from the rapidity of its current.

cerning Bolgary has been confined to the superficial mention of the tourist or the traveller, the dry remark of the geographer, or the unintelligible dispute of the Orientalist. Few, very few, even of those who have passed their lives on the soil that once belonged to ancient Bolgary, have been found willing, if I may be allowed the expression, to quit the beaten and productive paths of popular science, to wander o'er the gloomy and solitary wilderness which forms the grave of this exterminated nation, where obstacles and difficulties meet the hardy investigator at every step, as he gropes his solitary way through the darkness by which he is encompassed. With regard to European travellers, it is easy to conceive why these interesting ruins should have remained almost without a mention; for how few of the latter who have visited Russia have extended their journey beyond St. Petersburg, or at the utmost beyond Moscow! It was the dearth of materials that rendered the composition of the present chapter a task of no small difficulty to their author; nor would he probably have been able to have furnished it at all, had it not been his good fortune to become personally acquainted with two or three learned inhabitants of Kazan, who at the present day have devoted their researches to the subject. It was partly owing to their valuable assistance, partly to his own personal investigations, that the author was enabled to gather,

from scattered and obscure sources, the precious materials which have furnished the historical sketch of this people, which forms the companion and the sequel to the present chapter, wherein he purposes giving to his English readers a description of the ruins of this once celebrated town, such as he found them at the period of his visit.

As is the case with almost every other monument of antiquity in the interior of Russia, these ruins are but little known, and seem to be objects of indifference to all save the Tartars, who come in crowds to offer up their prayers on this spot of desolation ; they merit, notwithstanding, especial attention, both from their associations and their antiquity, which is estimated at upwards of a thousand years.

And yet it were well if the lover of antiquity who visits Bolgary had no bitterer cause of regret save that of finding these ruins the objects of neglect and oblivion ; but, alas ! cold and indignant is the thrill which he experiences when he learns how busy the ruthless hand of destruction and havoc has been for ages with these venerable relics. At the period of the visit of Peter the Great to Bolgary, in the year 1722, there existed on the site of this desolated capital upwards of seventy imposing structures, all in a tolerable state of preservation. In 1768, another Russian sovereign, the Empress Catherine the

Second, visited the same spot, accompanied by three celebrated academicians, Pallas, Lepeuchin, and Ozeretzkoffsky. The latter, in an account of his travels, which he subsequently published, states that he found on these plains but forty-four ruins, of which he gives the names and the measurement alone, without any description of their form or character. Thus, in less than forty-six years, twenty-six buildings had disappeared ! At the present day, sad to relate, there remain but six ; the rest have been all wantonly destroyed by the rude peasants of the neighbouring villages, who, whenever they needed stones for the erection of a hovel or an outhouse, made no scruple to level the mosques, palaces, and minarets of Bolgary, whose hardy cement had enabled them to baffle the inroads of ten succeeding ages, and of a thousand Siberian winters, only to become the prey of these rude despoilers.

Far from sharing the indifference with which these venerable memorials of an exterminated nation are generally viewed, the author of these Sketches, on his arrival thither, heard with a thrilling pleasure of their existence, which promised to procure for him that rare enjoyment, so rife with melancholy yet agreeable sensations, "that magic charm," as Byron names it, which the contemplation of the ruined structure exercises over the mind of the beholder to whom the past and its sad vestiges are

objects of veneration. Under the influence of this feeling, which will doubtless be understood by the intelligent reader, the author formed the resolution of making a special pilgrimage to, and a sojourn amid the ruins in question, which are situated about a hundred and fifty versts from the town of Kazan ; and desirous of becoming acquainted at the same time with the peculiar character and scenery of the river Volga in that province, he determined, spite of the difficulties which opposed the project, to perform the journey by water. Hiring therefore a small covered boat, called a *dostchennik*, at a favourable season, which gave promise of a continuance of auspicious weather, he embarked in this fragile and rudely-constructed barge, which awaited him on the river Kazanka, at the foot of the fortress; and which, thanks to the considerate care of his Russian servant, Feophan, who undertook to serve him both as cook, body-guard, and valet during the excursion, had been prudently furnished with various luxuries (among the rest may be mentioned a mattress and a samovar, those two indispensable requisites in Russian travelling by land or flood), enhanced with a modest store of that material nourishment which, according to our miserable human organization, the body never fails to yearn for, even while the mind is the most engaged in its meal of intellectual food. Three days glided by in a very pleasing manner during this excursion,

which presented several striking scenes, so fully entitled to the notice of the traveller, as to render it unnecessary to apologize for the following brief digression from the immediate subject of the present chapter.

## II.

The banks of the river Kazanka are flat and unattractive, and its waters flow between marshy plains and extensive forests of brushwood. Occasionally a monastery or a village makes its appearance, and it was between two of the latter that the author's bark glided, about an hour after he quitted the landing-place at the foot of the Kremlin of Kazan. The first bears the name of the *Yagodni Sloboada*, or the "Suburb of Berries," apparently because in this spot berries formerly abounded; it contains several large and well-built houses belonging to rich merchants, and several vast tanyards. The second is called the *Admiralteisky Sloboada*, or the Admiralty Suburbs, from the circumstance of an Admiralty having been established here by Peter the Great; this monarch having supposed this spot particularly eligible, in consequence of the great facility which it afforded for procuring oak, iron, anchors, and other materials, as well as in consequence of the annual inundation of the Volga, which would enable the ships built here to be floated along the Volga to the Caspian Sea. Here Peter the Great spent several days, writing down

his orders, and giving verbal directions for the construction of the establishment. This admiralty has since been transferred to Astrachan, but many of the original buildings remain. In one of these is reverentially preserved the barge, called the Tver Galley, in which the Empress Catherine II. made her journey to Kazan along the Volga, and which narrowly escaped being lost, with its illustrious passenger, during a violent storm on that river. It contains upwards of twenty rooms elegantly fitted up ; its surface is painted green, decked with various figures and gilt ornaments.

A little further on, to the right, rises a vast powder-manufactory, established here by the Russian Government, and to which is attached a village, principally inhabited by the families of the soldiers engaged in the manufacture, which employs upwards of a thousand men.

Nothing worthy of particular mention struck the author's notice, till he arrived at the mouth of the river Kazanka, where its waters mingle with those of the river Volga. Here, a little to the left, a vast number of barks, vessels, and boats attracted his notice, and a concourse of people, busily engaged in charging and discharging various species of merchandise, proved to him how active and at the same time extensive was the commerce of Kazan. This spot bears the name of Buckcaldar, and forms the principal port of Kazan trade.

After having spent a short time in the midst of this busy throng, examining the various barks,—many of which were constructed and painted in the most fantastic manner,—the author recommenced his solitary journey, now on the Volga, and soon arrived opposite a high and rugged mountain, called Ouslonn, on which is situated one of the most picturesque villages that the Government of Kazan can boast of possessing. This village, which bears the same name as the mountain, contains about four hundred houses, and is divided into two parts, Upper and Lower Ouslonn. The lowest is almost entirely peopled by members of the sect called Raskolniks, to which allusion has been made in the chapter entitled “Kazan as it is.”

There was a time when the members of this sect were objects of the severest and most cruel persecution; but their patience and firmness outworeid the Russian authorities, and at the present day, thanks to a more tolerant Government, they are allowed to live in peace, and to address their prayers to the Almighty in the manner which pleases them best. A few years ago, Archbishop Philaret, now Metropolitan of Kieff, having visited this village, assembled the Raskolnicks, and made a fresh effort to induce them to take refuge in the bosom of the Russian Church. The attempt proved as fruitless as the preceding, and Philaret departed without having converted a single member of this stubborn

sect. During the night which succeeded his departure, a terrible fire broke out in the village, which was almost entirely consumed. The Russian priests affected to consider this as a judgment of Heaven, and took great pains to endeavour to terrify the Raskolniks on this occasion. The latter however appear to have been of a different opinion, and, setting calmly and quietly to work, rebuilt their village, which in a few weeks presented a more handsome and better appearance than ever.

The mountain on which this village is built presents a grand and imposing appearance when viewed from the opposite bank of the river Volga. From its summit arise the turrets and cupolas, variegated in colour, of the village churches, while at its base may be seen the wooden cottages of Lower Ouslonn. It is this mountain which ancient Arab travellers so frequently make mention of in their writings, and which Prince Kourbsky described "as being so high as scarcely to be measured by the naked eye." This same mountain, one of the highest of the chain to which it belongs, was likewise the point which early geographers chose as the point of junction between Europe and Asia, and which consequently attached Kazan to the latter division of the globe.

A very interesting object which this mountain possesses is the grave of the unfortunate Princess Menschikoff, the wife of the celebrated minister and

friend of Peter the Great, whose life offers so striking an example of the caprices of fortune. Born of the humblest parentage, the occupation of his youth was that of a hawker of pies in the streets of Moscow. Peter often met him in the streets, and was so pleased with the prompt and witty replies which he ever returned to his questions, that he took him into his service, where his talents soon raised him to a degree of honour that no subject ever yet attained. His influence became so great, that on some occasions he was permitted to represent the Tzar, and gave audience to ambassadors, while Peter appeared at his side as a private gentleman. In a word, he had acquired such an empire over the mind of his master, that the Russian people supposed his influence to have been effected by sorcery.

After the death of Peter, Catherine I., who owed her elevation to the throne to the intrigues of Menschikoff, testified her gratitude by placing the reins of government in his hands, and letting him rule in her name. Previous to her decease, she crowned her favours by betrothing the daughter of Menschikoff to Peter II., her successor.

The scene now suddenly changed. From the highest degree of prosperity this hitherto favoured child of fortune was precipitated into a state of the most abject humiliation. Deprived of his rank and station, we find him shortly afterwards traversing in

a bleak season, and in the utmost misery, the dreary wilds of Russia, on his way to Siberia, whither he had been banished. By his side was his faithful wife, accompanied by her children. Unable to bear the pain of separation from one she loved so well, this faithful woman resolved to accompany her husband to his distant place of exile, Yakoutsk, six thousand versts from the Russian capital. Her maiden name was Natalia Arsenicff. The offspring of an illustrious family, and remarkable for their uncommon beauty, her virtue and gentleness gained her the affection even of those courtiers who envied and hated her husband, while her generous devotedness has rendered her memory revered at the present day by the Russians. The fatigue however of so rude a journey was beyond the strength of her tender frame : in vain she endeavoured to bear up against it, and to conceal her sufferings ; she sank at Ouslonn, and died there in the arms of her husband. Menschikoff with his own hands dug the grave which was to receive her mortal remains ; and when the priest who performed the last funeral rites inquired what was the name and rank of the deceased, the former is said to have answered, "The dead have neither name nor titles ; call her in your prayers the servant of God." A monumental stone was subsequently placed over her remains, and a small church erected on the spot by the pious care of one of her descendants ; but the church having

been destroyed by fire, the stone was split in several places by the heat, so that at the present day the following words,

“Here lies the body of the servant of God, N——,”

are all that can be deciphered of the inscription that was engraved upon this interesting though now neglected monument.

Opposite Ouslonn, in the middle of the Volga, is an island called *Ostroff Gostinoï*, or the Hospitable Island, which, at the period of the taking of Kazan, afforded a place of refuge to Khan Schig Alei, the ally of the Russians. Near this spot, on the 6th of August, 1815, a waterspout formed itself on the Volga,—a phenomenon rare on the sea, and still more so on rivers.

The river Volga, in this vicinity, presents a truly grand appearance. Opposite Ouslonn it is upwards of a mile and a half in breadth, and during the whole of its course through the province of Kazan its width is seldom less than a mile. It is however to be regretted that the depth of this majestic stream so little corresponds to its immense extent; indeed in many places, where to the eye it presents the appearance of a vast gulf, its waters are so shallow that even a bark taking three feet of water finds no other means of advancing but by easing itself of a portion of its freight. This forms a sad drawback on the commerce carried on through the medium of this stream.

Many scenes and objects struck the author's notice as he sailed along this noble river, but which space obliges him to pass without a mention ; the Cavern of Soukaieff, one of the most remarkable works of nature in these distant climes, demands a passing description. The entrance to this cavern, which is situated on the side of a craggy and lofty mountain on the left bank of the Volga, and at a considerable height from the surface of the river, is so effectually concealed by a thick fence of brushwood, that the author, though informed of its exact situation, after seeking for some time in vain for the aperture, was forced to hire a peasant of the neighbourhood to serve as his guide to the spot. On passing through a small semicircular opening, the visitor finds himself in a vast vaulted chamber, constructed as it were by the hands of man, and whose walls, as even and smooth as the mason could have made them, contribute to increase this artificial appearance. This circumstance, as well as the hidden nature of its entrance, render the supposition probable that, in former days, this cavern served as one of the places of resort and concealment of the pirates and brigands who infested the Volga, and whose numbers were so considerable, and depredations so daring, as to induce the Grand Dukes of Moscow to send at different periods an armed force against them. It has even induced many persons to believe that the cavern itself was formed by them ; but this

conjecture appears groundless from the fact that at the further extremity of the first cave, is a second aperture, which serves for entrance to a second cavern, much resembling the former in its shape and construction, but considerably more extensive, and the interior of which presents a species of lake, covered with floating ice. Not a ray of daylight finds its way into this cavern, and the visitor who comes hither unfurnished with a boat and torches, will have seen no more of it than its entrance. Spite of the curiosity this cavern excites, it has not yet been explored; more than one learned traveller however, among whom was the celebrated Humboldt, made an attempt. The superstition of the peasantry, who for some particular reason look upon the research as a species of profanity, joined to many other more material obstacles, have hitherto baffled every effort that has been made for this object. It has been found that a pistol fired into the second cavern gives a tenfold echo, which has induced a belief that there are other caverns besides those here mentioned. All this remains, and will probably long remain, a matter of doubt; nor is there any probability that this cavern will be explored, until the Russian authorities deliver an order and furnish the means of duly examining its nature and extent\*.

\* Since writing the above, the author has been informed that a fresh attempt was about to be made by Professor Wagner, of the University of Kazan.

The water contained in the second cavern is found to possess sulphurous properties, and is supposed to have a connection with a sulphur spring, which rises in the neighbouring village of Soukhaieff, and which many persons visit, attracted by the healing power which is attributed to its waters. Near this cave, likewise, on the brink of the Volga, naphtha collects in considerable quantities, but is employed alone by the boatmen and fishermen who frequent this stream, and who seldom fail to halt here, in order to grease with it their boots, gloves, and leathern aprons.

A mountain, called the "Shining Promontory," situated in the vicinity of this cavern, was the haunt of another and very numerous gang of pirates, who, even within the last fifty years, attacked and pillaged the barks on their way to or return from the fair of Makarieff. Even at the present day, spite of the active measures taken by the local authorities, who have established upon the Volga a constant line of guard-boats filled with armed soldiers, this formidable race of pirates, not yet extinct, and which has become so celebrated in the annals of their country, finds ever and anon means to renew its depredations.

About fifteen versts from the cavern of Soukhaieff, on the summit of a still higher and more rocky mountain, rises the picturesque town of Tetioush, so called from its having been the residence and

property of a famous Tartar Prince, named Tioutiouch, who distinguished himself at the siege of Kazan, and proved a terrible foe to the Russian invaders. It will seem singular to the reader, that a town built on the very verge of a vast stream, should suffer cruelly for want of the very element which flows so abundantly around it ; such is however the case with Tetiouch, whose inhabitants undergo in this respect one of the tortures which Tantalus was condemned to suffer in the shades of Tartarus. To drag water up the steep and rugged pathway, whose very ascent even to the unburdened passenger is laborious and fatiguing, becomes a matter almost bordering on impossibility ; thus the inhabitants of Tetiouch are forced to content themselves with the scanty supply of a spring which flows from the side of the mountain, and to which access, in consequence of the clayey nature of the soil, is at all times difficult, while in damp and rainy weather it becomes even dangerous. The population of Tetiouch is reckoned at about 1400 souls, and the town consists of one large street, built on a line with the river, and in the middle of which rises a stone church, of a Byzantine order of architecture. From the summit of this mountain, on a clear day, a very fine and picturesque view presents itself to the beholder ;—the wide, majestic Volga flows at his feet ; a vast expanse, variegated by woods and villages, extends around him ; while in the

distance may be seen the lofty turrets of the ruined town of Bolgary, which rise so proudly from the midst of the desolate plain to which the author, pilgrim-like, was directing his solitary steps.

At the foot of this mountain is situated a group of fishermen's huts. Among other fish caught in this vicinity, is a species called the "mad fish," which, though rejected by the Russians, is a favourite article of food among the Tchouvash tribes, who dry it in the sun.

Aga Bazaar was the next spot at which the author halted, and where his little excursion was to terminate. This landing-place was in former times the principal port of Bolgary, and is situated seven versts from the ruins of that city. It is supposed to have been likewise the scene of a very considerable fair, for Bolgary, long before the foundation of Kazan, was the grand mart of European and Asiatic commerce. Some ruined fragments and a rampart of earth are still visible. Aga Bazaar was the place where the Empress Catherine landed when she visited Bolgary, and the road which leads thither received, in commemoration of her visit, the name of the Tzarsky Doroga, or Imperial Road.

Pursuing this road, the author soon arrived at the ruins in question. They rise from the midst of a vast uncultivated plain, while around lie scattered the miserable huts of the Russian peasants who inhabit the spot. This village is still called Bolgary;.

but, alas ! what a contrast between that once opulent and splendid capital, and the wretched hamlet which occupies its site and bears its name !

### III.

"Here the Muezzin's call to prayer is heard no more!"

The first object which attracts the attention of the pilgrim who visits the Ruins of Bolgary is a lofty turret, called the "Great Column" or "Round Tower," the summit of which terminates in a cone, surmounted by the Crescent.

This tower, built of huge masses of grey stone, is supposed to have been employed in former times as a minaret. Spite of the thousand years which have passed over its head, it has suffered but little from the ravages of time or the elements, and still stands, a monument as it were of the powerful people by whom it was erected. In consequence, apparently, of the ground on which it was built having sunk, or of the stones which have been taken from its foundation, this minaret inclines considerably on one side, much in the way of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. A stone staircase, constructed in the interior, leads to the very summit of the tower. Near the entrance, on ascending a few steps, a large massy stone strikes the attention, on which several travellers who have visited Bolgary have engraved their names. Among these inscriptions may be seen one which was traced by no less a personage than Peter

the Great, who, as we have remarked, visited these ruins in the year 1722. The first letter of the name has been defaced by time, but the four last letters may still be clearly deciphered.

This minaret was repaired some years back at the expense of a rich Tartar merchant of Kazan, who was wont with his family to perform an annual pilgrimage to these ruins.

Around the tower are scattered various fragments of broken walls, which are looked upon as the remnants of the mosque to which this minaret is supposed to have belonged. Beside the latter object is an old Russian church, which is said to have been built of huge masses of stone, the remains of the ruined Bolgar temple. Like the minaret, and probably from the same cause, it has lost its erect position. Be it remarked likewise, *en passant*, that both the Tower and the Church, in losing their perpendicular position, have turned towards each other in the inclination; and there you see the lofty Moslem minaret bowing as it were to the Christian temple, which seems humbly to return the polite gesture. But I am very much inclined to believe that the latter will on some future occasion prove a sufferer from this courteous position of its colossal neighbour, for there is no doubt that when the former falls (and fall it one day must, for it is already breaking near the centre), the Christian edifice will surely be shattered to ruins by the

descent of the Moslem turret. To prevent this triumph being given to the followers of Mahomet, the authorities of Kazan would do well to strengthen this tower with iron, and to repair that portion which seems the weakest ; however, I fear me much, if the matter should ever become the subject of their deliberations, they would adopt a far more easy and cheaper mode of preservation, namely, by destroying the lofty tower itself which causes the danger.

Enshrined in the walls of this church are a great number of sepulchral stones, which were taken from the ancient tombs of the Bolgars, to serve for its construction, and which are remarkable for their size, and still more for the inscriptions they bear on their surface. The foundations of this place of worship are supposed to be entirely composed of the same interesting materials. The inscriptions which these stones present are in the Arabic, Tartar, and Armenian languages. Peter the Great was the first who ordered a copy of these inscriptions to be taken and translated. These were inserted by Lepeuchin in his work, but appear to have been very inaccurately translated by the Tartar Mollah entrusted with the task. The celebrated Klaproth, aware of this incorrectness, wrote from Paris to Count Pototsky, soliciting the latter to send him copies of the original inscriptions which had been taken from these stones, and which were preserved

in the archives of Kazan. On receiving them, fresh translations were made by the well-known Orientalist, M. St. Martin. Thanks to Klaproth for this enlightened interest, which has rescued from destruction these valuable memorials of the Bolgar nation; for a few years after, a great fire which took place in Kazan, burnt the whole contents of its archives, where these inscriptions were preserved. At the present day also, very few of the stones from which these inscriptions were taken exist, and even those few, exposed as they have been to the terrible climate of these regions, can now scarcely be deciphered.

The inscriptions which have been preserved are forty-seven in number, of which we select the following for the consideration of the reader:—

## 1.

“God alone is great! God alone is immortal! All that has life must one day perish!

“The name of him who reposes beneath this stone was Aboubekir Asslan Hassan Mahmouk, the son of Bakliot. Replenish his tomb, great God, with thy mercy; embellish his sojourn in the land of the blest, and grant that he may repose peacefully in thy kingdom, after his iniquities have been forgiven him. He appeared before the merciful throne of the Almighty in the year 619.”

## 2.

“Election depends upon God. He is living, who never dies. All that has received life from Him must one day perish.

"The hand of beneficence, our blessed Souvar Yali Khodja, the son of Ali Khodja, the grandson of Amratcha Khodja, the great-grandson of Aboubekir Khodja, departed this life on the thirteenth of the month of Tchumad, in the year of the persecution\*."

## 3.

"God alone is great ! God alone is immortal !

"This is the tomb of the very beautiful, very wise, and very pious Princess, Saphara, the daughter of Rysaï, by origin of the province of Chamacha. Great God ! grant her infinite felicity ; forgive her the sins she committed, and imprint on her features at the terrible day of judgment a celestial light.

"She died in the year of Mahomet 716."

## 4.

"He is the Living (God), who never dies !

"Abdullah, son of Achmet, this is his tomb.

"Death is a cup, from which all that is mortal is forced to drink. The grave is a portal, through which all mankind must pass."

## 5.

"He is the Living (God), who never dies !

"At the last day of judgment, which inevitably will arrive, God will rouse up the dead from their graves.

## 6.

"He is the Living (God), who never dies !

"Here reposes the excellent, generous, all-wise, amiable, chaste, innocent, and devout Aï Baika, the daughter of Mukhammed, who died in the year 721 (A. D. 1321)."

\* The Bolgars by these words referred to the period of the Mongol invasion.

## 7.

"He is the Living (God), who never dies !

"This is the tomb of the great Schei, the very magnanimous, very worthy, very powerful, very excellent, Moussa Bek, the patron of the learned and the support of the feeble. Spread, O God, the arms of thy vast mercy over him, and scatter over his grave the flowers of the elect. He died in the second month of Rebia, 716 (A. D. 1316)."

The most antique of the sepulchral stones which have been found at Bolgary can boast of 1200 years,—the most modern, of 400.

Inscriptions in the Armenian language, bearing the date of the year 984, and one of the year 557, prove that the Bolgars had a very extensive commerce at a period when all the neighbouring nations were plunged in the rudest state of barbarity.

## IV.

Not far from the minaret just described, is a small but interesting octangular building, supposed to have been in former times a mosque. At the period when the Russians established themselves in this country, this structure was converted into a Christian church, consecrated to St. Nicholas. The invocations to Mahomet which had formerly resounded in its walls, were succeeded by prayers addressed to the true God : both are now silent ! The lower part of this building forms a square—the upper part changes into a hexagon ; wild plants

project in every direction from its surface, and give it an inexpressible appearance of desolation.

Both the exterior and interior of this building are in a better state of preservation than any other of the ruined structures of Bolgary ; this is probably owing to its having been used as a Russian place of worship, which has induced the peasants of the neighbourhood to treat it with more respect than they have shown to the rest. The walls are embossed with a very peculiar and original species of architectural ornament, and the mouldings that adorn the windows and doorway show a beauty and a taste which prove that the arts must have been studiously cultivated by the inhabitants of Bolgary.

## V.

After having examined this interesting structure, the author directed his steps towards a group of ruined edifices, situated about three-quarters of a mile from the last-mentioned ruin. The space he had to traverse was broken into continual elevations and hollows, resembling the waves of a stormy sea. And terrible is the tale those hollows tell ! On this spot, nay, for more than seven versts in circumference, the traveller cannot make a single step without trampling on human bones, which lie scattered around, almost on the surface, in countless numbers ! These are doubtless the remains of the in-

habitants of Bolgary, all of whom were massacred on the taking of their capital by Tamerlane, and partly of the Tartars who fell in the constant battles between the Princes of the Golden Horde and those of Sarai, who disputed possession of this town when its power had declined. About fifty years back, this profusion of human remains induced certain speculators to establish a saltpetre manufactory on this plain, which assumed the irregular appearance alluded to, in consequence of the digging for bones. At the present day a considerable portion of the plain is converted into a cornfield, which, like the plain of Waterloo, described by Byron, furnishes corn of so rich and luxuriant a growth, as to bring to mind the poet's exclamation—

“How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!”

The ruins to which the author was now approaching are the most extensive as well as the most remarkable that remain of the proud city, Bolgary. They have been the subject of much speculation and argument among the archaeologists who have visited them. Some have supposed them to have been the remains of a palace, others of a mosque, and many regard them as the remnants of one of those famous public baths, which existed in Bolgary, and alluded to by Prince Ismail Abdoul Fedi and other Arab writers.

They consist of a large circular hall, surmounted

by a dome or cupola, having an aperture above, apparently formed to admit the daylight. This chamber, which evidently formed the under story of a high building, is connected with two wings, both of which are of a considerable size, and these by their construction seem to indicate that more than one-half of this edifice has been wantonly destroyed. The interior of these wings is singularly divided into several small low rooms, having no windows or apertures by which the light of day could have been admitted, and proving, in consequence, that artificial light must have been employed. This has partly given rise to the belief, which was supported by the learned Professor Erdman, that this ruin was formerly a bath, for it is well known that it was the custom of the Eastern nations to employ lamps in their baths; the light they gave being considered more luxurious than that of day. But why so many small apartments—apartments the doors of which are so low and narrow that a child of five years could scarcely pass through them in an erect position? Might we not as well suppose this structure to have been a prison, and these the cells in which prisoners were kept confined? But it is in vain to conjecture; and all that the mind experiences on contemplating these ruins has been admirably expressed in the following stanzas of ‘Childe Harold,’ which occurred to our memory as we gazed upon this scene of desolation :

"Chaos of ruins! who can trace the void?  
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
And say—here was or is—where all is doubly night.  
\* \* \* \* \*

The double night of ages, and of her,  
Night's daughter, ignorance, hath wrapt and wraps  
All round us;—we but feel our way to err.  
The ocean hath its chart—the stars their map,  
And knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;  
But —— is as the desert.

Now we clap  
Our hands, and cry *Eureka!* it is clear,  
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near."

But what renders this ruined structure particularly remarkable is the existence of a vast subterranean passage, which extends from beneath the edifice to a very considerable distance, and in which the peasants of the village have from time to time dug up numerous gold and silver coins, and sometimes even vases and other articles of the same metals. About the foundations also of this structure much ancient money and precious objects have been found. This is doubtless the cause why these ruins have so considerably diminished in size and extent since the period of the visit of Peter the Great; for on observing the drawings that were made of this edifice at that period, it is evident that nearly half of its bulk has disappeared, in consequence of the avidity which the peasants of the adjoining villages have shown in their search for hidden treasures, while, in so doing, they have not scrupled to demolish entire wings of this structure.

This vandalism was at length put an end to by the authorities of Kazan, and indeed it was high time to interfere in the matter ; had they delayed but a few years longer not a stone would have remained erect of these interesting ruins, for as soon as the treasure-seekers levelled a wall, the huge stones of which it was composed were carried away by some other party of peasants, to be employed in their village, in the construction of a hovel, a barn, or some wretched outhouse.

These ruins bear the name of the *Baylaya Palata*, or the White Palace.

## VI.

At a little distance to the left, about eighty sa-gènes from the White Palace, stands another very noble ruin, which is likewise the subject of endless dispute among the learned. It is called by some writers the *Tchornaya Palata*, or Black Palace ; but tradition gives it the name of the *Soudeisky Dome*, or the Judgment Hall. Whether it was a palace, a tribunal, a mosque, a caravanserai, or any other structure, who can decide ? Whatever it may have been, the little that remains of it at the present day is sufficient to prove that it must have been an imposing edifice. It is infinitely higher than any other of the ruined structures, and bears marks of a superior style of architecture and elegance. The portion that remains is likewise in an excellent state

of preservation, particularly the interior, which is ornamented and wrought in a very peculiar and original manner. In many parts the stucco with which the ornaments and pilasters were made is still intact. Altogether this ruin is a noble one, and bears itself proudly, spite of the ten centuries which have rolled over its head. And when we consider the frightful climate, and the excessive cold and heat to which it has been so long exposed, we cannot but wonder at the little ravage which time and the merciless elements have wrought upon it.

## VII.

The last object which now remained to claim our attention was a second minaret, somewhat similar to the former, though inferior both in its height and proportions. It differs moreover from the other in this respect, namely, that it stands perfectly erect, and possesses an iron railing, which encircles its summit, an addition made by a rich Tartar merchant, called Younouseff, before mentioned. This minaret does not however excite the same interest which is felt on contemplating its companion ; partly because the reparations it has undergone have given it too modern an appearance, and partly because its rival by its inclined position has acquired a particularly picturesque and striking aspect. Around lie scattered numerous fragments of walls, half buried in grass and furze, and covered with that gay kind

of verdure which loves to gather itself on the ruin, as if in mockery of its age and desolation. These fragments are supposed to be the remnants of the mosque to which this minaret belonged. Not far remote from this minaret stood some few years back the ruins of the Palace of the Khans, though nothing now remains of this structure save a heap of stones, which scarcely suffice to give an idea even of the plan after which it was erected.

Save the ruins I have described, nothing now remains of the grand city of Bolgary\*, and of its ten thousand habitations. Its actual state is well depicted in the following verses of Byron :—

“Cypress and ivy—weed and wall-flower grown,  
Matted and mass'd together ; hillocks heap'd  
On what were chambers ; arch crush'd, column strewn  
In fragments ; choked-up vaults and frescos steep'd  
In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,  
Deeming it midnight. Temples, baths, or halls,  
Pronounce who can—for all that learning reap'd  
From her research hath been that these are walls.  
Such is—— ‘Tis thus the mighty falls !”

And such is at the present day Bolgary, once the grand and the powerful. A kind of melancholy creeps over the mind when we stand in the midst of a ruined city like this, and reflect on the past and the present. The lesson this scene of desolation teaches us at a single glance, speaks more to the heart than could a thousand volumes of

\* It is thus designated in the Russian and Tartar Chronicles.

moralizing philosophy. It strikes home to our bosoms, and bids us think of ourselves. It was, as we now are, full of life and vigour; it is, as we soon shall be, crumbling in the dust, unknown, unremembered, and uncared for. Be it so! It is a requiem little to be dreaded by those who can draw nothing but sorrow from the past, *ennui* from the present, and gloom from the future.

### VIII.

In the year 1722, Peter the Great, during a journey which he made through the different provinces of his empire, was induced by curiosity to visit these ruins. At the period of his arrival, we are given to understand that there existed on the plains of Bolgary upwards of seventy different structures, all in a tolerable state of preservation. There now remain but five: the rest have been all destroyed by the rude peasants of the neighbourhood. What a cruel truth is this! Even the five we have described would have shared the same fate, had not very lately the local authorities, aroused from their lethargic indifference by the cries of regret of one or two Orientalists, taken measures to prevent the total annihilation of these interesting monuments.

This illustrious monarch, after having wandered for some time about the ruins, ascended one of the highest of the minarets, and there, struck with ad-

miration at the extensive view which lay before him, he is said to have pronounced the following words :—“These towers are a proof of the wisdom of the Bolgars. From similar heights they could always remark any movement or attack undertaken by their enemies ; thus they were always prepared for combat, and were enabled thereby to afford assistance to the towns in the vicinity of the capital.”

Forty-five years after the visit of this great monarch, Bolgary witnessed the arrival of another illustrious personage, the Empress Catherine II. This great princess has left us a memorial of a visit to these ruins in a letter which she addressed about the same time to Voltaire. The following is what she writes :—

“In the course of my journey along the Volga, I quitted my bark, and landed for the purpose of visiting the ruins of the ancient town of Bolgary, which was besieged and taken by Tamerlane for his son-in-law. I found there several stone structures, *and eight minarets\**, very strongly constructed. I approached one of these ruins, near which were forty Tartars, some of whom were employed in prayer. The Governor of the province assured me that this place was looked upon as sacred by the Tartars, who in crowds throng thither for pilgrimage and prayer. Being desirous of knowing more

\* Eight minarets ! Thus six, from the time of the Empress Catherine, have been recklessly destroyed.

upon the subject, I addressed myself to one of the Tartars who pleased me more than the rest; he gave me to understand that he did not speak Russian; I consequently called another, and on my asking him who he was, he informed me that he was an Imam, and added, that among these ruins formerly lived a holy man, and that from very distant places pilgrims come thither to offer up their orisons upon his tomb\*.”

The Empress Catherine was accompanied in this journey by the celebrated Pallas, who has left us a very learned work on the Russian empire. Lepeuchin and Gmelin, both of whom hold a distinguished place in the annals of science, likewise visited these ruins; and latterly they attracted the footsteps of the famous Humboldt, who spent several hours on this desolated spot.

## IX.

All travellers who visit Bolgary are struck with one particular circumstance—the almost total want of water. Neither river, nor lake, nor spring, is to be found in the neighbourhood. The Volga is seven miles distant from the town. Pallas was particularly astonished at this deficiency, and makes the following remark:—

“ It is a circumstance calculated to excite our

\* From the Correspondence of the Empress Catherine with Voltaire, from the year 1763 to 1778: 120th Letter, vol. ii.

surprise, that so rich and splendid a city as Bolgary should have had so unfavourable a position, with regard at least to water, which could only be procured through the medium of wells, as is the case likewise with the present inhabitants of the village; however, it is very probable that the river Volga, now twelve versts from Bolgary, formerly bathed the foot of the walls of this town."

It is a question yet to be decided whether the latter remark is correct or not; there is however every reason to believe it so. It is a well-known fact that many towns formerly situated on the banks of the Volga, now stand several versts from that stream. It is equally authenticated that the Volga is continually changing and varying in its course; it has likewise considerably shrunk both in depth and width within the last two hundred years. It continues yearly to diminish more and more: this is partly to be attributed to the drying up of several lesser rivers which formerly poured themselves into this majestic stream, and partly to the diminution of the water in the Caspian Sea, which we are assured formerly covered with its waves the steppes on which are now situated the provinces of Saratoff, Astrachan, and Orenburg.

At all events, it is difficult to suppose that the Bolgar nation should have chosen for their capital a spot where there existed such a cruel want of an element which forms one of the first necessities of

existence, or that a town, whose principal resources and riches lay in its commerce, should have been situated at such a considerable distance from the river Volga, through the medium of which it carried on the extensive trade for which it was celebrated. I have even been assured, on credible authority, that some few years back the wreck of a vessel of a very ancient construction was found deep buried in the sand near Bolgary; if this be true, it tends to authenticate the belief that the Volga formerly flowed by the walls of this city.

The same deficiency is connected with the village of Bilarsk, which occupies the site and bears the name of another town of the Bolgars, called Bilarsk or Boulimere. In former times a river, the Bilarka, flowed through the centre of the town, but is at the present day entirely dried up. This town was the second in size and importance of the Bolgar nation, and was surrounded by a treble moat and rampart. The latter, which rose twenty-five feet from the surface of the earth, and of which a considerable part is still to be seen, was more than fifteen versts in circumference, and upwards of five in breadth. Some few years back, there existed here various ruined structures, and Ritchkoff, in his ‘Essay on the History of Kazan,’ makes mention of several stone buildings, of which the most considerable were the remains of a temple and one or two round towers. Nothing now remains of Bilarsk but a few

scattered heaps of stones, and the foundations of one of the towers alluded to by Ritchkoff, which was much larger, he says, than those of Bolgary. These ruins, like the monuments of Bolgary, owe their final disappearance to the rude hands of the neighbouring peasantry.

Of the numerous other towns of the Bolgar empire, not a trace now remains. The spots on which formerly stood the once flourishing towns of Joukotine, Builimat, Kouman, Karsoon, Toura, Isky-kazan, Arsk, Gormeer, Arpatch, and numerous others, are become either the site of rude hamlets, or are furrowed by the plough of the husbandman, who in the performance of his solitary task, little dreams that the lonely plains over which he is moving, were once full of life and activity, and rich in palaces, temples and human habitations. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

## X.

The plains of Bolgary, as we have before stated, have been from time immemorial the object of diggings and researches on the part of the peasants, who have found, on many occasions, vases, cups, idols, arms, and in particular, a vast number of gold, silver, and copper coins struck during the Bolgar sway, and bearing for the most part Arabic inscriptions. Many long thin sticks of silver, the generality about two inches and a half in length,

have likewise been dug up ; these are supposed to have been a species of money used by the Bolgars. During my short stay in Bolgary, I myself bought from the peasants of the neighbouring village a variety of old copper coins, a copper jug, and two skulls which were found by a man while digging the foundations of his cabin. Within the last ten years, the number of objects discovered gradually diminished ; and the peasants, who have by this time become aware of their value, turn whatever they dig up to account, by carrying it to Kazan, where they seldom fail in finding a liberal customer.

A Russian writer, Paul Yourtkoulsky, in speaking of Bolgary, relates the following interesting anecdote on this very subject.

“ Many years ago there lived,” he says, “ in the town of Spask, an old man named Josipater Vassilievitch, who was in the habit of buying of the peasants, for a mere trifle, any Bolgar antiquities that were discovered, and who subsequently sold them to amateurs at an exorbitant price. One day a peasant brought him a massive goblet of pure gold, finely wrought with bas-reliefs, and bearing various inscriptions in the Arabic language. The old man, on seeing this treasure, felt a joy which, in the presence of the peasant, he took care however to conceal. The bargaining began. The peasant asked a hundred roubles (about £4), the purchaser offered about ten shillings. After some

time, the peasant consented to reduce his price to seventy-five roubles, and the old man agreed to give fifty. The affair stopped here. The peasant tied up the cup, and Josipater quietly allowed him to retire, convinced that no one but he would buy it, and that the peasant would return in three or four days, as he had often done before, and accept the sum, insignificant as it was, which he had offered. Several days however having elapsed, and the peasant not appearing with the goblet, the old man began to reflect seriously on the matter. Apparently he became more than usually uneasy, for, without further delay, he ordered a telega\* to be harnessed, and seating his old bones in the jolting vehicle, set out in haste for Bolgary. On arriving, he went straight to the hut of the peasant, and judging from the delay that it would be in vain to bargain further, without another word he took from his purse the required sum, and placed it on the table before the owner of the treasure. His vexation and regret may be easily imagined when the latter told him, with an ironical smile, that he had delayed rather too long, for that the cup was sold the day before. With these words, the moujick reached from a shelf a common box, and took from it a large packet of bank-notes and a bag of silver coin, which he had received for the goblet in question. The sum amounted to a thousand roubles.

\* A Russian cart without springs used by the peasants.

This money was given for the cup by the famous Russian Chancellor, Count Roumantsoff, who had on the eve visited the ruins of Bolgary, and, hearing of the cup, bought it willingly at that price."

This precious antiquity is preserved in the Roumantsoff Museum in St. Petersburg.

An old major, of the name of Joukoff, whose estate was situated some ten or twelve miles from Bolgary, during a series of several years purchased from the peasants all that was found on this spot, and contrived to get together an interesting collection of Bolgar antiquities. One of these objects, a poniard, attracted general attention. This poniard, from the point to the handle, is sixteen inches in length; the handle alone is about five. The blade is formed of the purest Damascus steel, dark as the raven's wing. The handle is of ivory, ornamented on the side by a bright row of fine red sardonyx-stones (an Asiatic precious stone) set in silver. But the most remarkable part of this poniard is its scabbard, formed of pure silver, ornamented with a treble circle of handsome arabesques of filagree work, and various other fantastic carvings. This sheath is so perfect in its workmanship, that it might rather be taken as the *chef-d'œuvre* of some celebrated modern silversmith, than as an antique Asiatic production, found in Bolgary, and lying for centuries in the earth. From the rich and elaborate workmanship of this poniard, we must sup-

pose that it belonged to some wealthy Bolgar warrior, in whose hand, says Yourtkoulsky, many a time it caused the blood of the Muscovites to flow.

This poniard, as well as many similar objects found in Bolgary, gives us good reasons for believing that the Bolgars had attained to great perfection in the art of working metals; an opinion corroborated by a remark made by the old major we have spoken of, who relates, says Yourtkoulsky, that when the sheath of the poniard we have described was found, one of the rings was broken; the major wishing to get it mended, had it soldered by several of the best silversmiths in Kazan, but it was always done in such a manner that the least blow or stroke broke it again, although no silver was spared in the soldering. It was clear that the silver, of which the sheath is formed, was mixed up with some other metal or substance, which increased its strength.

I have heard that another landed proprietor of the province of Kazan, whose estate is near Spask, possesses likewise a collection of Bolgar antiquities, consisting of arms,—such as pikes, lances, halberds, blades of swords, etc. I regret to say that I had not the opportunity of seeing these various interesting articles.

These various articles will serve to show that the Bolgars, even centuries ago, could boast of a considerable degree of good taste and refinement. We

now purpose to give our readers, as well as we are able, some account of the people to whom the antiquities we have described belonged.

## XI.

The Bolgars, who probably derived their name from the Volga, inhabited the whole extent of country comprised between this stream, the Oural mountains, and the rivers Samara and Kama. From this may be judged what an immense extent of territory owned their sway. Their origin is unknown. Several Orientalists suppose them to have belonged to the Finnish race; other writers believe them to be descended from the ancient Normans, who peopled the north of Russia. But it is far more natural to believe that the Bolgars were of the Mongol race; for on the spots where their towns were situated, at different periods, a great quantity of bones have been dug up, and all the skulls, by their peculiar conformation, appear to belong to the Mongol caste. This is however a matter difficult to decide, for as history furnishes us with no account of the origin of this people, it may likewise be supposed that the Bolgars, after their conquest by the Mongols, intermingling with that race, lost thereby their distinct and natural caste.

One or two Arab writers who visited Bolgary at the period of its splendour, have left us a brief description of what most struck their notice in this

city, at that period in a flourishing condition. Ibn Fozlan's account is the most copious and interesting. His visit arose from the following circumstances. Almous, king of the Bolgars, had written to the Caliph of Bagdad, entreating the latter to send him priests to convert his people to the Mahometan faith, and architects to construct mosques in the capital. The Caliph, flattered by his request, acceded to it willingly and sent to Bolgary an embassy, of which Sausen El Rassy was the chief, and Ibn Fozlan the secretary. This embassy quitted Bagdad in the month of June (A.D. 921), traversed Bucharia and the country of the Bashkirs, and arrived at Bolgary in May, 922, nearly a year having elapsed in the performance of the journey. On hearing of the approach of the ambassador, King Almous quitted his palace and went forth to welcome him; he was mounted on horseback, and accompanied by all the grandees of his court. As soon as the cavalcade met the train of the ambassador, the King alighted, returned thanks to God for the accomplishment of his wishes, and according to an Asiatic custom, flung golden coins at the heads of the strangers. A few days after, a grand festival took place in honour of the ambassador, at which Ibn Fozlan tells us numerous other kings of the country, who had been invited, were present. King Almous himself was dressed in a black robe, with a turban of the same colour,—a singular choice

on such an occasion. According to the custom of the Bolgars the Queen was seated beside the King, and it was on this occasion she received the presents the Caliph of Bagdad had sent her. The festival was terminated by a banquet, during which the strangers had a second time the honour of being profusely pelted with gold coins by the attendants of the King.

The result of this embassy was the conversion of the Bolgar nation to the Mahometan faith, which took place, as Ibn Fozlan relates, in the year 942. A Tartar historian places however the conversion of the Bolgars to Mahometanism at a much earlier period, namely, in the ninth year of the Hegira, or 636 after Christ. His manuscript, which is entitled 'The History of Bolgary,' is curious in one respect alone, which is, that the author has treated of every subject he could think of, save that which the title of his work intimates, for in the whole of the composition the description of the Bolgars scarcely occupies a couple of pages. As regards the conversion of the Bolgars to the Mahometan faith, here is what he relates.

In the ninth year, says he, of the Hegira, three learned Arabs, Zubir, Abder Rahman, and Telhr, came to Bolgary, with the intention of converting this people to the Mahometan faith. On their arrival, they practised the art of healing, and, in consequence of some very successful cures, which were

regarded by the Bolgars as miraculous, they acquired great celebrity and veneration. About this time, the daughter of Hyder Khan, king of Bolgary, being in danger of death from sickness, the Arab doctors were applied to, and Hyder Khan promised his daughter in marriage to him who should effect her recovery. Zubir undertook the task, and adopted the following way, in order to effect the supernatural cure, which, according to the manners of the Mahometans, he preceded with an appeal to Allah ; and after a long and fervent prayer, to the astonishment of all present, a tree, emitting a most delicious perfume, suddenly sprang up from the floor of the apartment. From this, Zubir gathered a certain quantity of its leaves, of which he made a potion ; this he administered to the princess, and, strange to say, at the very same instant she rose from her couch perfectly restored to health. It may be, that such a miracle worked strongly on the mind of Hyder Khan ; he kept his promise and gave his daughter to Zubir ; and some time after, full of admiration for the religion of Mahomet, whose followers, he fancied, possessed the power of working miracles, he embraced the Moslem faith, in which he was imitated by his entire nation. Zubir remained in Bolgary ; but his companions, satisfied with the success of their journey, returned to Arabia, from whence they came.

It is to be regretted that neither Ibn Fozlan nor

any other writer has informed us what was the religion of the Bolgars previous to their conversion to Mahometanism. Some have supposed it to have been the Christian ; but I believe the opinion is an incorrect one, for there are many reasons for believing that they were Pagans.

It would seem that the Bolgars were no sooner converted to the faith of Mahomet, than they became inspired with a strong desire of converting their neighbours likewise, for we find them, not many years after, sending an embassy to Vladimir, the Grand Duke of Muscovy, engaging him and his people to embrace the Moslem faith. Vladimir, on receiving this generous proposition, immediately despatched to Bolgary certain emissaries, with orders to ascertain what kind of religion the Mahometan was ; but the description they gave him on their return, pleased but little this prince. The messengers assured him that “on their entry into the mosques of the Bolgars they found them sitting erect without their girdles, and making continual and repeated prostrations ; that after this they rose, looking to the right and then to the left, like men who had lost their senses ; it appeared likewise, that there was no mirth or gaiety among this people, and nothing but sadness and bad smells ; and that from this they augured that their religion was a bad one. They added, that wine was forbidden by the Moslem creed.

Vladimir, who it would seem was a jolly prince, exclaimed, on hearing this, "Wine is a joyful beverage, a man cannot live without it\* ;" and consequently refused to adopt the Mahometan creed. It is well known that, some time after, he and his nation became Christians ; and it was probably well for Christianity that he did so. It would be difficult, as a writer has remarked, to foresee what would have been the fate of Europe, had this prince embraced the Mahometan faith. The Mahometans reigned at that time in Sicily and Spain ; and shortly after the empire of the Osinanlis rose from the ruins of the Greek empire. Let us only suppose that Russia, peopled at that period with fanatics, uniting its force with that of the Moslems, instead of opposing them, and animated with a profound hatred for Europeans, who alone, after the conquest of Africa, Spain, Sicily, and Greece, resisted the progress of Islamism,—who can doubt but that the whole of Europe would have been the prey of the followers of Mahomet ?

If this conjecture be correct, Christianity and Europe both owe something to the fortunate circumstance of Vladimir's finding that a good glass of wine was one of God's choicest blessings ; and that no religion could be good which forbade its enjoyment temperately. Ibn Fozlan likewise informs us that, in the country of the Bulgars, tempests and

\* See the Nestorian Annals.

hurricanes were of frequent occurrence, and that the cold which reigned there was excessive. The same remark is made by Abou Hamid Andalousy, who adds, that the snow fell in the winter in such quantities that even the heat of the summer failed in melting it entirely. According to other writers, there reigned during seven months of the year so rigorous a cold, that the earth became as hard as a rock, and could not be dug even to bury the dead. Ibn Batuta asserts, that in winter there were no other means of travelling save with dogs, as is the custom even at the present day in the north-west of Siberia. "At this season," says he, "the roads are covered with such slippery ice that neither man nor animal can stand erect, and dogs alone can advance by the aid of their nails."

Spite of this intense cold, we learn however from Ibn Fozlan, that the Bolgars cultivated industriously the soil, which produced plenty of corn, barley, and millet: it is easy to believe that the ground might have been very productive, when we consider that the rivers Volga and Kama by their frequent inundations fertilized the country then, as they do at the present day. The Arabs speak likewise of apples, which however they state to have been of a very bad quality at that period, as is still the case in our own age; a great quantity of the country was covered likewise with large nut-trees. The fir-tree also grew in abundance, and from

this the Bolgars distilled a sweet juice, which by fermentation was converted into a very intoxicating beverage. The principal nourishment of the Bolgars consisted in horse-flesh and millet; the latter formed likewise the food of the Russians. Fish, oil, and hydromel (a beverage made from honey), were likewise in vogue with this people.

The Bolgars paid to their sovereign a fixed tax, which consisted in an ox-skin from each family (probably tanned); even at the present day these skins are still called *Boulgary* among the Persians, Bucharians, and Kalmucks. The leather of Kazan and its vicinity still enjoys a great celebrity; thus it is, that this species of manufacture has survived the people who first employed it, and to whom it owed its present perfection.

That a great degree of luxury existed in Bolgary, is evident from the remarks of several Arab travellers who visited this city; and when we consider the extensive commerce which this people possessed—that Christian merchants came from afar to dispose of their merchandise in this town, and that it was likewise to Bolgary that the pirates who infested the Volga brought their plunder for sale—there is little cause for wonder that, through the medium of this extensive commercial intercourse, luxury should have crept in among the great and the rich of this nation. Thus we may easily believe Ibn Fozlan when he informs us, that the king of Bolgary had

a tailor from Bagdad who made his clothes; that his throne was covered with a species of gold brocade of Greek manufacture, and that his garments were remarkable for their richness, and the costliness of the stuff employed in their making. But the greatest proof of the degree of luxury which reigned in Bolgary is, that as early as the middle of the tenth century, even the common people of this town wore boots, at that time considered a great luxury, for we find that the lower class of the Russians all wore the common *laptyi*, a species of sandal formed of the bark of trees.

Ibn Fozlan likewise tells us, that, when any one met the king in the street, custom demanded that his hat should be removed, and a profound inclination made while the king was passing. This custom seems to have astonished the Arab travellers, who considered it indecent to uncover the head.

The same writer informs us also, that whenever the king gave a public audience, the queen was seated by his side. The former always dined at a separate table, and sent a piece of meat round in succession to each of the guests. Hydromel was presented in profusion, and custom demanded that the guest should take away with him the remains of whatever had been presented to him at the banquet. The Russians, it would seem, had likewise a similar custom, according to the account of Herbenstein.

The laws of the Bolgars were exceedingly severe, and even cruel. Theft and licentiousness were two crimes most rigorously punished. It was probably owing to this that the women bathed, without fear or censure, in company with the men, in the public baths and rivers, and without being either dressed or even veiled. This proves that the Bolgar women enjoyed a far greater liberty than either their Tartar or Russian neighbours.

From the writings of Ibn Fozlan, we gather likewise a host of superstitious practices and notions which he asserts reigned among this people, and which contribute to induce us to believe that previous to their conversion to Mahometanism, the Bolgars would seem to have been Pagans or idolaters, and not, as some have supposed, Christians. For instance, an extraordinary veneration for serpents was the cause that a Bolgar was never known to kill one of this race of reptiles. We find the same custom at the present day among many tribes and races of America and Africa, and it is well known that the Kalmucks and the Bashkirs made them formerly objects of their adoration. The howling of dogs was looked upon by the Bolgars as the omen of a brilliant fortune, while, on the contrary, it is considered among most other nations as the sign of coming misfortune. A house which had been struck with lightning was looked upon as accursed, and was abandoned for ever. But the

most singular of all the customs which reigned among the Bolgars, was that of *hanging* all men who distinguished themselves by their sense or learning. This habit, of which Ibn Fozlan speaks, might well be doubted, did not many other Arab writers affirm the same fact. One of them, Amid Toury, explains this usage in the following manner. A man of sense and learning, he says, was, according to the opinion of the Bolgars, more worthy of serving God than mankind, and it was for this reason that the Bolgars thought it a point of duty to despatch him in all haste to the regions of the blest ; the method however that was employed to transfer the man of talent from his natural life to a better existence, was singularly chosen. It is not difficult to discover in this cruel and singular custom the same legislative principle which existed in the ostracism of the Greek republics : when a man became too powerful or too influential by his talents, his enemies demanded his exile—an evil almost equivalent to death.

Notwithstanding this barbarous usage, there is every reason to believe that laws of the strictest morality existed among this people. On all the coins struck at Bolgary, and of which a great quantity has been dug up at different periods from the ruins of this town, we discover sentences that the purest Christianity could have found no reason for disowning. "Life is a moment that has been given us

for doing good and glorifying God : " such is the inscription which we read on the greatest portion of the Bolgar money.

This is all the information—alas, how scanty!—which we are able to gather from ancient writers, concerning the town of Bolgary. But, barren as it is, it suffices to give us an idea of the importance this city held even at the early period at which they wrote. In possession of the fertile country which extends from the mouth of the Kama along the left bank of the Volga, the very position of this town must have ensured its prosperity. In fact, it is natural to suppose that the Bolgars had in their hands all the commerce of the north. Their intercourse with the Arabs of Bagdad and Damascus had been the means of initiating them in the arts and sciences ; for it is evident that long before the invasion of the Mongols, coins were struck at Bolgary, with inscriptions from the Alcoran, although at that time the Mahometan religion had not yet been introduced among them. The Genoese furnished them, through the Crimea and the Caucasus, with arms, articles of dress and luxury, and even with various artists. It was partly owing to these favourable circumstances that the Bolgars in a short time extended their dominions over their neighbours, the Tchouvash, the Tcheremisse, and the Mordvas ; and not satisfied with these conquests, they penetrated to the confines of the Russian ter-

ritories, and took possession of the town of Mourom, which Rurick had founded on the banks of the Oka, to guard against their invasions.

## XII.

From the period of the latter event, which took place in the year 1088, up to the year 1240, we find the Bolgars engaged in continual war with the Russians. Both nations seemed to have suffered much from this continued struggle. In the midst of this sanguinary warfare, a terrible storm, which was destined so cruelly to humble the pride of Bulgaria, burst upon this devoted people. This was the invasion of the Mongol hordes, under the command of Batou, the celebrated conqueror and founder of the town of Kazan. Nothing could impede the progress of these barbarous invaders, who came like a torrent, sweeping all before them. And Bulgaria too,—Bulgaria, the rich, the splendid,—was destined to share in the general destruction. This city, in its turn, was attacked and plundered; a great portion of its inhabitants were massacred; its commerce became totally annihilated. The few of its inhabitants who escaped from the sword of the invader were obliged, for their sustenance, to resort to manual labour, and the use of those arts which had been introduced among them in the time of their prosperity. The fabrication of leather, for which this town had been always celebrated, now

became the principal source of its income. In a word, Bolgary, fallen and desolate, the constant place of rendezvous of vagabond hordes of Tartars and Mongols, who intermingled with its population, lost at this period its liberty, commerce, and splendour, and seemed on the point of losing both its national character and its name.

Some time after this disastrous event, we find Bolgary once again rising from the prostrate condition to which it had been reduced. Ousbeck Khan, a chief of the Golden Horde, made every effort in his power to restore Bolgary to its former splendour. He built a vast number of stone edifices, erected several mosques, founded new schools in Bolgary, and we learn from the Annals that, at his death, this town had acquired afresh a certain degree of its former consideration and influence. But unfortunately for Bolgary, the successors of this prince, whose thoughts seem have been principally devoted to pillage and rapine, counteracted all the wise plans which Ousbeck Khan had arranged for the prosperity of this town. In fine, in the year 1350, Hedzer Khan, Sovereign of Khiva, taking advantage of the unceasing dissensions and struggles which existed between the princes of the Golden Horde, quitted his distant place of sojourn, and attacked Bolgary, at the head of a numerous army. The town was again taken, the reigning prince and his family were massacred, and Bolgary

had to suffer afresh a thousand evils under the sway of its new masters.

For several years subsequent to the invasion of Hedzer Khan, this unfortunate country was the scene of sanguinary conflicts between the different princes, who, in succession, attacked and took possession of Bolgary. In the midst of all the horrors which mark this period of confusion and bloodshed, it is scarcely possible to follow the thread of the history of this town. We find however this unfortunate people passing several times from the sway of Mamaï, to that of Timour Boulat, during the long conflict between the princes of the Golden Horde and those of Sarai. To sum up the list of evils, we find, in the Russian Annals, in 1365, that a numerous troop of pirates from Novogorod, after having previously pillaged Joukhotine, and several other Bolgar towns situated on the banks of the river Kama, descended the Volga to Bolgary, which they took and plundered. At this period may be fixed the total extermination of the commerce which the Bolgars had hitherto maintained with the north of Russia. Spite of these repeated and cruel reverses, Bolgary however some years after rose again from the state of desolation and ruin into which the ravages of the pirates had thrown it. Timour Boulat, a prince of the Golden Horde, assembled in this town his forces, and strove, by pillaging his neighbours, to re-establish the fallen splendour of

Bolgary. At length he directed his adventurous course upon Nijney Novogorod, but being defeated by the Russians near the river Piani, he lost his life in endeavouring to escape with a small remnant of his troops. The Grand Duke of Nijney, not satisfied with this victory, sent shortly after his brother, at the head of a strong force, to Bolgary. Prince Hassan, Governor of the town, terrified at the enemy's approach, went forward with presents to meet the Russians. These were accepted ; the town was left unmolested, and the Russians returned to Nijney, after having dictated certain conditions, and named a sovereign of their choice, as the ruler of Bolgary.

It was not long after this event that a numerous force, composed of Novgorodian pirates, once more appeared beneath the walls of Bolgary, and threatened to set fire to the town ; it was only by paying three hundred pounds of silver that the Bolgars rescued their capital from menaced destruction.

About the same period, Mamaï, who had become the reigning Khan of the Golden Horde, and who had fixed his residence at Bolgary, not content with exercising his rapine in the southern provinces, sent his Tartar bands to ravage the provinces of Tver and Nijney. The Grand Duke of Nijney, Dmitry Constantinovitch, in order to repress these repeated acts of violence, marched afresh against the town of Bolgary. This took place in the year 1375. On the ap-

proach of the Russians, the Bolgars received them with a prodigious volley of arrows, and, by the aid of cannon placed on the summits of the ramparts, directed upon their adversaries a heavy discharge of stones and other missiles. The Russians, totally unacquainted with the use of these formidable engines, were at first stupefied by this attack ; but, regaining their courage, they advanced with new ardour beneath the walls of the town. It was then that the Bolgars sent forth to meet them a vast number of dromedaries, which caused a terrible confusion among the Russian cavalry, whose horses, terrified at the sight of these animals, reared furiously, and refused to obey their riders. Spite however of all these obstacles, the Russians succeeded in gaining possession of Bolgary. The rulers of the nation were forced to purchase their liberty by the payment of a heavy ransom; after which the Russians returned to their native land.

### XIII.

The Russian Annals make but little mention of Bolgary after the latter event. The dominion which the Tartars exercised over the Russian provinces, as well as their constant incursions, the principal object of which was plunder and pillage, are well known; and the latter only ceased after the great victory which was gained in 1380, on the banks of the Don, by the Grand Duke Dmitry, surnamed Donskoe.

Mamaï, defeated by the Russians, had not time to assemble his scattered legions, ere he was attacked by Toktamuish; conquered a second time by the latter, he fled to Kiaffa, where he met with a violent death. His wife and treasures fell into the hands of Toktamuish, who, in 1381, sent delegates to Bolgary to proclaim his sovereignty over that nation. This is the last fact which the Russian Annals make mention of relative to Bolgary. The Tartar chronicles offer here and there a few scattered remarks concerning the fate of this people, whose history must have been so interesting, since we see, from the little that has been recorded, that it passed successively through every species of human prosperity and vicissitude; and the decline and fall of Bolgary, as was the case with all the other nations of antiquity, took place at a period when vice and licentiousness reigned despotically amidst its inhabitants. Indeed corruption and depravity seemed to have extended to such a degree, that the Tartar chronicles remark, that the destruction of this capital by Tamerlane was generally looked upon as a just chastisement of Heaven.

This famous conqueror, whom the Tartars call Aksak Timour, made his appearance about the end of the fourteenth century. After several years of unceasing strife with Toktamuish, the latter was totally defeated, and forced to seek safety in flight. All the Tartar chronicles unite in affirming, that it

was after the siege and taking of Constantinople, that Tamerlane directed his way to the north, and appeared beneath the walls of Bolgary, with a numerous army. The manner in which the Bolgars defended their native city, speaks in favour of their bravery and heroism. The siege lasted seven years: want and sickness however having diminished the number and resolution of the inhabitants, the town was at last taken by assault. It was, say the Tartar Annals, on a Friday (the Sabbath of the Mahometans), and at the hour of prayer, that Bolgary fell into the hands of the invader. This city contained at that period ten thousand and twenty-four large houses. A great portion of the inhabitants are said to have been massacred, and the entire town reduced to ruins. The reigning Khan, Abdoullah, was killed by order of one of the generals of Tamerlane; his two sons however found means to escape from the town, and sought refuge in the neighbouring forests.

After the destruction of Bolgary, Tamerlane directed his way to Bilarsk, another Bolgar town of considerable importance. Its inhabitants saved their lives by opening the gates to the invader. The town however shared the fate of Bolgary, and was reduced to a heap of ashes. After having laid waste the whole country, and put to death a hundred and twenty-four princes of the conquered nation, Tamerlane marched to the south; and it is here that we lose the last trace of the history of this people, of

whose after-fate neither the Russian nor the Tartar annals make the slightest mention. Some writers have however supposed that the total and definite ruin of this nation took place long after the invasion of Tamerlane, and that the destruction of the Golden Horde caused necessarily that of Bolgary; although they suppose its ruin to have been gradual, and considerably after the commencement of the Tartar dominion in Kazan. Others have supposed that this nation ceased to exist, at the period when the country which it occupied was invaded by the vagabond hordes of Kalmucks; but similar opinions rest only on conjecture, no historical proof existing to corroborate them.

Four centuries have now elapsed since this nation, formerly so flourishing and formidable to its enemies, ceased to exist. The wars it sustained against the Russians, the number of towns it founded, and which have all disappeared like its capital; the colonies it established, without exhausting itself, on the banks of the Danube,—all these facts offer evident proofs of its might, riches, and enterprising character. One of the colonies we have alluded to still remains, namely, Bulgaria, and forms one of the provinces of the Turkish empire. It was either before or about the period of the birth of Christ, that this portion of the Bolgar nation crossed the Danube, and established itself in the country which it occupies at the present day.

## CHAPTER VIII.

POUGATCHEFF THE COSSACK.—HIS TWO VISITS TO  
THE TOWN OF KAZAN.

I. A MAD PRISONER.—II. A TERRIBLE VISITOR.—III. YEMELIAN  
POUGATCHEFF.—IV. SIEGE OF ORENBURG.—V. REVERSES OF  
POUGATCHEFF.—VI. CAPTURE AND DEATH OF POUGATCHEFF.

## I.

It was about the latter end of winter, in the year 1772, when Catherine II. occupied the Russian throne, that a small detachment of Cossacks were leading through the streets of Kazan a numerous troop of prisoners, many of whom, bound in fetters, slowly followed their conductors towards the Tiourem-noe Zamok,—the name given to a vast prison, occupying an eminence on the right bank of the river Kazanka. The rapid beating of a drum, customary on such occasions,—the rattling of the chains, in whose clank the sound of the drum was almost buried,—the wretched and emaciated figures of the greatest part of the prisoners, combined to excite in the mind of those who witnessed this scene, a feeling of painful

commiseration. But this sentiment of pity, so natural to the guiltless mind, would have ceased upon a closer examination of this degraded throng, to which remorse and shame were equally strangers : few of the prisoners evinced either sorrow for their present position or concern for their future lot ; on the contrary, they laughed and jested in a boisterous manner with their comrades on the female portion of the crowd, and even at times with the soldiers, under whose control they were placed, and who seemed to consider it no infringement of discipline or duty to endeavour to beguile a weary road and a disagreeable task with an occasional joke or a merry laugh. But there was one prisoner among that throng who had acquired, both from his fellow-captives and his guards, no trifling degree of consideration,—partly because the fame of his turbulent deeds and riotous conduct had gone before him,—partly because the heavy chains which shackled his limbs and the punishment which awaited him were unable to curb his ferocious disposition, which at every moment showed itself afresh in bursts of passion and rebellious exclamations,—and partly because his reckless demeanour and the bold expression of his features, united with a certain rude yet wonderfully persuasive eloquence, were of a nature calculated to inspire both interest and submission. To judge from his words, one would have been inclined to believe that this man suffered under a derangement

of intellect, or pretended this for some secret purpose ; at all events it was evident that his mind was influenced by some wild supposition that he was one day destined to wield the rod of power, and that he would yet have the means of requiting the evils he was then experiencing. The invectives, as daring as they were perilous, which he heaped profusely on the Russian authorities, even in the hearing of his guards ; the hints of some terrible change which he asserted would shortly take place in the Russian empire, and of which he was to be the leading instrument ; and the ferocious threats of vengeance which he swore he would one day exercise on his oppressors, were heartily enjoyed, as may easily be imagined, by the turbulent spirits by whom he was surrounded. There were some few however among the troop of delinquents who, though they listened with equal delight to the rebellious invectives and savage maledictions of their fellow-prisoner, seemed to consider his boasts and menaces so little in accord with his present situation, that they firmly believed that the bold Yemelka\* (such was the Christian name of the transgressor) had lost his senses. With such a conviction, it may naturally be supposed that the former did not omit the opportunity of indulging in a jest at his expense.

“Eh, comrade ! you talk like a Kniaz†, and

\* Diminutive of the word *Yemelian*.

† *Kniaz*, a Russian prince.

threaten like a Tzar," observed one of these, striving to suppress a laugh which he did not think it prudent to give open vent to.

"For aught you know," returned the prisoner with a significant smile, "I may have been the first from my birth, and it shall not be my fault if I do not become the other!"

"List, brothers!" returned the first speaker, "Yemelka swears he is a Kniaz, and has the hope of becoming a Tzar. Hurrah! long live Tzar Yemelka!"

"Hurrah! hurrah! long live Tzar Yemelka!" was repeated in a jocular tone by some score of voices.

"What you utter in jest, *Rebiata*\*, at the present moment, you may one day utter in earnest," was Yemelka's reply.

"You go about the business in an awkward way," observed one of the Cossacks with a sneer.

"Every man has his own mode of working out his purpose," returned Yemelka; "and that man's plan is the best which turns out to be the most successful."

"Thou speakest well, friend," replied the Cossack, "and for aught I care thou mayest consider thyself Kniaz, Attaman, or Tzar, if thou wilt; but in truth one may well be excused supposing thy

\* *Rebiata*, my children; a phrase of very common use in Russia, addressed by a superior to the crowd.

brain to be a crazy one, else thou wouldest bethink thee that thy audacious tongue must mar thy purpose, if thou hast any in reality, instead of contributing to its success. Methinks thou mightest have learnt, ere now, that a silent tongue is a mark of a wise head ; for the proverb, sayeth it not ‘that the wolf who intends to attack the sheepfold, tells not the shepherd of his purpose’ ?”

“ He is but a coward,” replied Yemelka, “ whose mind harbours schemes which he fears to acknowledge : the brave man strikes not in the dark, and I was born of a race who wars not with cunning, but with the sword.”

“ E’en be it as thou wilt, brother,” observed the Cossack ; “ but the knout ere now has silenced many as bold a tongue as thine ; and Siberia is a chilly clime, and I fear me much thou art in a fair way to taste speedily the one and visit ere long the other.”

“ Not if my friends remain true to their promise,” said the prisoner ; “ and if they prove false, why, then it little matters what follows : but I doubt not their truth. I tell thee, Cossack, that thousands of thy brethren on the Ukraine and the Yaïk await but my presence to . . . ; but thou wilt see, if thou livest, strange things and stranger events, which, if thou dost not take part in, thou wilt be a dastard hound as well as a false traitor.”

The *cortége* had by this time arrived at the place of its destination. This was a large, massive build-

ing, surrounded by a lofty wall, joined together by four square towers. The entrance led through an archway, defended by a double iron grating. On each side of this gateway were stationed two soldiers, whose business was to examine all who entered or quitted the prison. On the right was situated a small wooden building, one of the sentry-houses of the garrison ; the sentinel on guard was pacing to and fro on the platform appointed for that purpose, while around him stood several other soldiers, viewing the approach of the delinquent troop. Suddenly the shrill alarum of a bell was heard; the soldiers, by an almost instantaneous movement, seized their arms, which had been piled in a pyramid before the guard-house, and arranged themselves in order ; the Cossacks drew up their horses according to military discipline, and the prisoners, at the same moment, uncovered their heads and stood in a humble attitude of silent submission. This *alerte* had been caused by the approach of a General who, in a small sledge, was seen drawing near the Tiouremnoe Zamok ; this was General Von Brandt, the Military Governor of Kazan. The soldiers presented arms as he passed, and the sledge had already advanced some fifty paces beyond the gateway, when the eye of the General alighted on the person of one of the prisoners who, instead of removing his cap as the rest had done, remained with covered head, and with a sinister

look on his features. Struck partly by this mark of disrespect from one already under the judgment of the laws, and partly by the daring and audacious demeanour of the culprit, the General suddenly ordered his coachman to halt, and with a sign of the hand he beckoned to the officer on guard to approach him. The latter flew to the General's side. "Know you that audacious and savage-looking culprit, who stands there almost in an attitude of defiance? To judge from his features, he must be a villain of no uncommon audacity. Bid him advance." The prisoner drew near the General, but his head remained covered, until the officer by whom he had been summoned, seized the offensive cap, and flung it to the earth. The sudden clenching of the hand and teeth, the knitted eyebrow, the flashing eye, which was fiercely bent upon the aggressor, sufficiently depicted the rage of the captive, who, folding his arms upon his breast, awaited the General's interrogatory.

"Thou art a bold villain!" exclaimed the latter, interrupting the deep silence which reigned around.

"That I am a villain, is false," returned the prisoner; "and that I am bold, I have heard from wiser lips than thine."

"Who art thou, insolent?" demanded the General in an angry tone of voice.

"Most men, at present, call me Pougatcheff the Cossack," returned the prisoner; "but I trust the

day is not far distant when I shall bear another title."

"And what title, fool, dost thou hope to acquire, save that which the whipping-post or the galleys can give thee?" asked the Governor, astonished as much at the prisoner's bold bearing, as at the strange and incomprehensible nature of his words.

"One, at the name of which," replied the prisoner, raising himself up to his full height, "thou, Governor of Kazan, will be glad to bend the knee, to save thy head from the axe or the hangman. But I will answer no further questions: suffice it to know, that when Pougatcheff the Cossack next visits Kazan, it will be with a more sounding title and under more favourable auspices; let my enemies then look to themselves."

"We have been questioning a madman," exclaimed the General, after gazing attentively for some minutes at the prisoner, as if to ascertain the truth of this conjecture; "however, we will try whether corporeal discipline will not bring him somewhat to his senses, or at least teach him a certain prudence in the presence of his superiors. It is my order therefore,—and do you, Sir (addressing himself to the officer on guard), see it faithfully executed,—that this insolent Cossack receive without delay two hundred lashes; which administered, you will let me know the effect they have had on his reasoning faculties. I have known many a mad-

man cured in the same manner ; the treatment may probably succeed with this one."

"General!" exclaimed Pougatcheff as he was dragged away to undergo the punishment awarded him,—"General! we shall probably meet again ; it will then be my turn to condemn and to punish. You shall not be forgotten."

The huge gate of the prison opened, Pougatcheff was dragged violently through the archway, the rest of the prisoners followed in regular succession ; and the General, after exchanging a few words with the officer on guard, gave the signal to his coachman, and proceeded onwards.

His order was immediately put into execution. Pougatcheff underwent the ordeal with an unwonted firmness ; at every fresh stroke his curses grew more and more violent ; and his fellow-prisoners, who had been purposely assembled, by way of example, to witness his punishment, and who had been curious to know whether their comrade's courage corresponded with his words, were so struck with the indifference which he testified on that occasion, that Pougatcheff's empire over their minds became visibly increased ; and on their return to the prison, there were not wanting many who gave him to understand that they were ready to second him in any daring enterprise his brain might have engendered. But Pougatcheff had conceived a scheme in which their aid could be of no assistance,—a scheme in

which he knew there were thousands ready to second him, and which his present detention delayed, but had not annihilated. This very project, too daringly avowed, had been the cause of the dilemma in which he at present found himself; for Pougatcheff was as imprudent as he was bold, and made no secret either of his designs or his ambition. It was principally among the Cossacks of the Jaik that he had hitherto employed his rude eloquence; he had succeeded but too well, and thousands of partisans had declared themselves willing to engage in his cause. A general revolt was to take place, and Christmas was the period fixed for the movement. In the midst, however, of his projects, some broil or tumult in which he had engaged in the little town of Mallifok, induced the authorities to arrest him, and to send him under judgment to Kazan. Here it would have seemed that his career was over; but his partisans were active, and had neither lost sight of their chief or the hope of liberating him; they furnished him therefore with money for the corruption of his guards, and this influential mode of seduction, joined to Pougatcheff's promises and threats, was not long in effecting his freedom.

The affair happened thus. One day, about three months after the period I have described, that Yemelian Pougatcheff quitted his prison-walls to answer certain interrogatories in the presence of the Governor-General of Kazan. Handcuffed and fettered,

he was accompanied by two soldiers of the garrison. Arrived at a street called the Zamoschni Reshotki, Pougatcheff's eye alighted on a kibitka, harnessed with three horses, which stood at some distance before him ; the kibitka was without a driver. A smile of joy lighted up the features of the prisoner, as he exclaimed, "Thanks to my faithful friends ! they have been true to their promise !" The two soldiers who accompanied him had been already bribed. With a sudden spring, Pougatcheff threw himself into the equipage ; the two soldiers were as quickly seated on either side of him. Pougatcheff seized the reins, the whip rattled in his hand, the horses set forth at full gallop, and in a minute or two after the driver and his comrades were on the outskirts of the town.

The Governor waited long on that day the appearance of the prisoner ; a search ensued, but none could tell what had become of the captive or his guards.

Only two days after this occurrence, a document was received from the Judicial Court of St. Petersburg, which condemned Pougatcheff to the punishment of the knout, and perpetual banishment to the mines of Siberia, and which enjoined His Excellency the Governor of Kazan to be prompt in the execution of the sentence. His Excellency's task was a more difficult one than the Judicial Court had imagined.

## II.

In the month of June, 1774, the very month in which Pougatcheff, a year before, had effected his escape, an innumerable band, composed of Cossacks, Bashkirs, Kirghese, Kalmucks, Tartars, and Russians, crossed the river Kama, and directed its march towards the town of Kazan.

At the head of this half-barbarous host was a bold adventurer, who bore no less a title than that of Peter the Third, Emperor of all the Russias.

The fame of his deeds had preceded him; vast provinces had been devastated, fortresses taken, towns burnt, their inhabitants massacred; in fine, if credit could be given to the voice of rumour, neither man, woman, nor child found mercy in his eyes. Two hundred thousand persons of every class, age, and sex, had already fallen victims to his cruelty. On his banner were written, in characters of gold, the words *Redivivus et Ullor* (the Resuscitated and the Avenger). As brave as he was ferocious, he had inspired his army with a confidence and a devotedness, which seemed to ensure success to his efforts and his cause. They had saluted him Emperor with a unanimous voice, and had sworn to sacrifice their lives to establish his empire. This ferocious adventurer, this pretender to the Russian throne, this avenging chief, was Pougatcheff the Cossack.

One may easily conceive the panic of the inhabitants of Kazan, when the news of this terrible visitor spread through the town. Many fled with their families and servitors to Nijney Novogorod ; others retired to their country estates, and buried their property in the earth. The authorities likewise lost all presence of mind, and seemed principally occupied with the idea of their own preservation. As for his Excellency the Governor-General Von Brandt, the news of the coming of Pougatcheff acted so terribly on his nerves, that his death, which occurred a few days after, was attributed by many to the effects of this fearful intelligence.

The news which shortly after arrived in Kazan was of no very consolatory nature. Ossa, a fortress on the opposite bank of the Kama, had been taken and burnt ; and Major Skripitsin, commander of the battalion, had given himself up with the whole of his artillery to the conqueror, receiving the latter on his knees, with "images, and bread and salt." But Skripitsin, who had shown himself a coward, soon proved himself a traitor ; hardly had he taken the oath of allegiance to Pougatcheff, than he meditated the means of betraying him. In connivance with Captain Smirnoff and Sub-lieutenant Menaeff, he composed a letter, which he had about his person, awaiting a favourable opportunity of despatching it to the Governor-General of Kazan. Menaeff made known the scheme to Pougatcheff, who, by

way of recompense, advanced him to the grade of Colonel ; Skripitsin and Smirnoff were hung.

The first action of Pougatcheff, after crossing the Kama, was the taking possession of two considerable wine-distilleries, called the Yijeffsky and Votkinsky Zavod. The directors were as usual hung, the distilleries sacked and burnt, and the whole of the workmen enlisted themselves under the banner of Pougatcheff.

The latter advanced towards Kazan. Colonel Tolstoi, commander of the Kazan horse legion, set forward to meet him. A terrible combat ensued ; Tolstoi was killed, and his troops entirely routed. Pougatcheff was now only seven miles distant from the town.

The next day, Pougatcheff established his camp on the banks of the river Kazanka. Accompanied by two of his officers, he crossed the river in a boat, and advanced towards the fortress, to take a view of the town. " Beware, Gossoudar," observed one of his companions, you are within the cannon's shot ; your enemies will doubtless fire." " Fool!" exclaimed Pougatcheff, " when didst thou learn that cannons were fired upon Tzars ?" and continued his observations, in presence of all the inhabitants of Kazan. Some time after he returned to his camp, and the next day was fixed for a general assault.

" Sauve qui peut !" was now the general cry in Kazan. The inhabitants rushed in crowds into the

fortress. Major-General Larionoff, who had been stationed with four batteries of cannon, to defend the outskirts of the town, abandoned his post and fled to Nijney ; many others followed his prudent example. “ In fine,” to use the words of a Russian writer\*, “ cowardice and pusillanimity took possession of every heart ; no man stood firm at the post of duty, but all were occupied with their personal safety.”

The assault began ; and who were the brave hearts who resisted the attack ? A band of schoolboys on one side, and a troop of manufacturers on the other. And where was the Governor-General, Von Brandt ? where was the Commandant Banner ? where was Major-General Potemkin ? Safely ensconced with their troops within the walls of the fortress ! Pougatcheff, as if disdaining to take part in the assault, sent forth a troop of vagabonds†, the greatest part unarmed, under the command of Menacff. These were met on their way by the pupils of the Gymnasium, with their Director Kanitz at their head, aided by a body of German workmen. This gallant little band had but one cannon, but they employed it well, and for a considerable space of time kept off the aggressors. At length they were forced to give way, but it was not until their

\* Ribushkin : History of Kazan.

† *Vide* History of the Rebellion of Pougatcheff, by Poushkin.

chief had been wounded, and several of their comrades slain. In another part of the town, a troop of Bashkirs fell upon the quarter belonging to the cloth-factory. The workmen received them with pikes, swords, clubs, and with a single cannon, which burst at the first discharge, and killed the cannoneer. The rebels set fire to the suburbs. The workmen took to flight ; the few soldiers who had remained at their post followed their example, threw down their arms, and took refuge in the fortress. In a word, the whole town, abandoned by its defenders, remained at the mercy of its lawless assailants.

The latter, as may be supposed, were not long in profiting by the event. Kazan, a town celebrated for its commerce with Asia, offered a rich booty to its invaders. The rebels rushed from street to street, pillaging the houses, the shops, and even the churches ; every person that they encountered, who wore a European dress, was cruelly massacred, being considered as nobles or men of rank, or, in the language of Pougatcheff, as “the persecutors and tormentors of the human species.” Many were slain at the very foot of the altar; among the rest, Major-General Koudrafftseff, an old man upwards of a hundred and ten years of age. He was on his knees, when a party of rebels entered the monastery of Kazan ; he rose and reproved them for their sacrilege : his reproaches cost him his life.

Pougatcheff had ordered that the common people should receive no molestation. But the Bashkirs disregarded the injunction : with their knotted whips they drove with blows before them all whom they encountered, men, women, and children. Many, to save themselves from their pursuers, rushed towards the river Kazanka, and were drowned in endeavouring to cross the stream.

The rebels had in the meantime set fire to several parts of the town ; a storm likewise arose : the flames were carried by the wind from street to street, from quarter to quarter, so that in a very short space of time, the whole of Kazan was in a blaze.

It was in the midst of this awful catastrophe, that Pougatcheff entered the town. He was mounted on a snow-white horse, and dressed in a red kaftan ; a drawn sabre glittered in his hand, and a thousand bells rang to welcome his entry. Arrived at an open space, he alighted from his horse, and seated himself with an assumed air of royal dignity in a chair that was prepared for him. He distributed his orders to several of his followers ; the news ran through the town, that the Emperor Peter the Third was seated in a certain square, awaiting the prisoners, and receiving the oath of allegiance.

The inhabitants of Kazan, driven by the Bashkirs into the presence of Pougatcheff, flung themselves, trembling, on their knees around him. The

women filled the air with their cries and lamentations. Suddenly Pougatcheff waved his hand to demand silence; he announced a pardon to the crowd assembled before him. A general hurrah burst from the throng. He then exclaimed, "Who wishes to serve their Emperor Petra Fedorovitch\*?" Thousands of voices were heard to echo consent, and cries of "Hurrah! hurrah! long live our gallant Emperor Peter III.!" continued for some minutes in uninterrupted succession.

A bustle suddenly took place among the assembled crowd. A party of Bashkirs had brought before Pougatcheff several prisoners dressed in a foreign costume. A wave of the hand intimated to the hangman, who stood not far distant, Pougatcheff's pleasure; and in a minute or two after, several were seen hanging from the branches of some neighbouring trees. Pougatcheff occasionally turned his look towards the Kalmucks, to see how they executed his order; suddenly his eye alighted upon the face of one of the prisoners, whom the hangman was dragging rudely forwards. At the same moment he called out to the Kalmuck to desist, and ordered the prisoner to be brought before him. "I have seen thy face before," said he to the trembling wretch. The latter informed him that he was the "Pastor of the Reformed Church," belonging to the Germans resident in Kazan, and that he had

\* Peter the son of Fedor.

once bestowed upon Pougatcheff charity, when his guards were leading him in chains through the streets of that town." "I recollect the circumstance well," replied the former; and immediately ordered the hands of the poor Pastor to be unbound: and, to prove to him his gratitude, he conferred on the good clergyman the rank of *Colonel*, set him upon a wild Bashkir horse (the Pastor had never been on horseback in his life), and gave him the command of a detachment of troops. The Reverend Colonel took the first possible opportunity to escape from his dangerous protector, and, a few days after, found means to return to Kazan.

The Tartars, in the meantime, had thronged around Pougatcheff with gifts and tokens of their allegiance. He received their tribute graciously, and gave orders that the Tartar Suburbs should be left unmolested. He then ordered that his horse should be again brought to him. Having mounted it, he rode for some time among the crowd, who prostrated themselves as he passed. Then bidding his suite follow him, he put spurs to his steed, and galloped towards the Tiouremnoe Zamok.

A minute or two brought him before the prison, to which, a year before, he had been led in fetters, and which he now revisited in such terrible glory. Its imprisoned inmates, his former comrades, were brought before him, many (as they were found) in chains. He recognized some of their faces. The

troop of delinquents welcomed their deliverer with cries of "Long live Petra Fedorovitch, our Tzar!"

"Said I not, *Rebiata*, that you would one day welcome me as your sovereign, and have I not kept my word?" exclaimed Pougatcheff. He ordered their chains to be removed, and bade them retire to his tent, and await his arrival.

A woman, with three children, who had been imprisoned in this very gaol for some months, flung herself at the feet of Pougatcheff. The moment he had gazed upon her features, with a cry of astonishment, raising her from the earth, and clasping her to his bosom,—Pougatcheff, the monster, who had seen thousands massacred before his eyes and by his command without a shudder,—Pougatcheff wept: that woman was his wife, those children were his offspring! but he did not betray himself.

"I know that woman," said he to his followers; "her husband did me a great service in former days; lead her to my tent; you will answer for her safety."

Pougatcheff, having given orders that the Tiouremnoe Zamok should be set fire to and consumed, rode off in the direction of the fortress of Kazan.

This stronghold, at the moment of Pougatcheff's arrival, was, almost in every direction, surrounded by the flames; the heat was intolerable. The inhabitants of Kazan, and the garrison who had sought a refuge in its walls,—penned up like sheep

in a sheepfold, suffocated with the dust and smoke, half petrified with fear,—were warned of the approach of Pougatcheff by the sudden firing of a battery of cannons, which he had stationed at a little distance from the Spaskie Vorott, a tower which forms the entrance to the fortress. At the first discharge, the women and children filled the air with their shrieks, and all rushed to conceal themselves in the corners and hiding-places of the various buildings. The churches were crammed to suffocation. In the cathedral, the Archbishop Veniamin was imploring, on his knees and with tears, the Almighty, that he would rescue them from the hands of the cruel and rebellious aggressor. This venerable prelate showed a firmness and a courage on that terrible occasion worthy of record. From the very commencement of the assault, he had remained on the steps of the altar, addressing prayers to Heaven, and exhorting the horror-struck throng to place their hope in the mercy of God. Suddenly, the roofs of several wooden structures caught fire in the very centre of the Kremlin; at the same moment a portion of the wall of this ancient stronghold fell with a violent noise, crushing all those who had sought a shelter behind it. The besieged, imagining that Pougatcheff had become master of the fortress, and that their last hour was arrived, raised once more a horrid cry, and flung themselves in despair on the earth.

But Heaven had interfered in their behalf. At the very moment when every obstacle that opposed the assailants had seemed to have been vanquished, Pougatcheff gave orders that his soldiers should abandon the town, and retire to their tents on the opposite bank of the Kazanka. News had at that minute been brought him, that Colonel Michaelson, with a considerable force, was approaching Kazan. Pougatcheff consequently saw the necessity of assembling his troops, who, busily engaged in robbing and pillaging the shops and houses, would have offered a sure prey to the enemy. Add to this, that the heat caused by the burning of numerous buildings in the vicinity of the fortress had now become insupportable, and that the approach of night tended to increase the difficulty.

A deep silence succeeded the discharge of the cannons, which for two or three hours previous had been heard. The rebels had abandoned the fortress. The besieged, jammed up within its walls, and who had expected to see the sabre of Pougatcheff brandishing before their eyes, wondered at the extraordinary calm which reigned around them. Midnight glided by ; the morning dawned ; the light enabled them to ascertain that their terrible enemy had abandoned the fortress ; they remained however in a horrible state of anxiety, awaiting a fresh assault. But, oh, the blessed change ! instead of the dreaded Pougatcheff, at the head of his fero-

cious followers, the unfortunate inhabitants of Kazan beheld with delight Colonel Michaelson, with a troop of hussars, galloping towards the entry of the citadel.

Pougatcheff, having assembled his troops, had ordered a manifesto to be read aloud, in which he gave his followers to understand that he was satisfied with the triumph he had obtained in Kazan; that it was his intention to march without delay to *his capital*, Moscow; and that any further delay in Kazan would be useless. Some hours after, he had already commenced his march. The dark clouds of dust which rose from the road on which he was advancing, announced his departure to the besieged. Kazan was once more free: its wretched inhabitants, who had suffered so cruelly, now quitted the walls of the fortress to which they owed their safety; they clambered on the parapets and turrets in crowds, to witness the retreat of Pougatcheff and his followers. Major-General Potemkin, with the brave garrison, now that the danger had passed, ventured forth from the citadel. In fine, a few hours after, a solemn service was performed in the cathedral, in testimony of gratitude to the Most High for this unexpected deliverance.

Of the town of Kazan nothing now remained save a mass of burning embers. Two thousand five hundred houses, twenty-five churches, and three monasteries had been consumed by the re-

bels ; the streets were strewed with dead and mutilated bodies. Such were the terrible traces which Pougatcheff the Cossack had left of his second visit to the town of Kazan.

### III.

“ If,” writes an historian, “ audacity of character, grandeur in enterprise, enormity of crime, and excess in every brutal and ferocious passion, can render a brigand worthy of a place in history, none has better merited this deplorable honour than Pougatcheff the Cossack.”

Yemelian Pougatcheff, who figures so terribly in the annals of the town we are describing, was born, on the banks of the river Don, in the year 1726. He served as a common Cossack soldier during the campaigns of the Seven Years’ War in the army of Field-Marshal Apraxin, and in that of 1769, against the Turks ; in all these campaigns he distinguished himself by the most intrepid valour. After the siege of Bender, he sued for his dismissal ; this being refused him, he deserted, and took refuge in Poland, among certain hermits of the Greek Church, who found means to keep him concealed. But Pougatcheff’s character was not of a nature calculated to support long the solitude and monotony of a monastic life ; he soon quitted his friends the hermits, and betook himself to Little Russia, among the sect of fanatics called the Ras-

kolniks, of which he was a member, and who received him with welcome. Some time after we find him among the Cossacks\* of the Jaik, busily employed in exciting secretly the rebellion which four years after was destined to burst out with such a fanatical fury.

In the midst of these preparations for revolt, Pougatcheff was suddenly seized and sent as a prisoner to Kazan. There his daring invectives induced the Governor to believe him insane. We have seen the part he acted in that town, and his escape from prison, and the punishment awarded him. Once more in the midst of his comrades on the Jaïk, he was not long in effecting the revolution he had before planned : he found means to persuade his followers that he was the Emperor Peter the Third,—that he had escaped from his prison at Robscha, where assassins had been hired to murder him,—that the report of his death was a false stratagem invented by the Empress Catherine ; and he stated that he threw himself on their protection, and claimed their assistance. This information was received with enthusiasm, and cries of “ Long live Peter the Third ! long live our Emperor ! ” rent the air. The principal Cossacks among his adherents took the oath of fidelity, and swore to sacrifice their lives in his behalf.

Master of a small yet devoted troop, the first thing Pougatcheff did was to march against the

town of Jaïk. This was a movement which served to show the extent of the impostor's audacity ; for Jaïk was defended by a strong garrison well armed with cannon and ammunition, while Pougatcheff's horde consisted of bandits without experience, means and artillery, and having nothing but their courage to defend them. The Governor sent forward Captain Kriloff to meet the invader, at the head of five hundred Cossacks, with a corps of infantry and two cannons. The rebels amounted to no more than three hundred men, the greatest part unarmed. But Pougatcheff did not lose his presence of mind in this extremity. He despatched to his powerful adversary a single Cossack, with a letter from his chief, addressed to the advancing troops. The Cossacks demanded that the paper should be read aloud ; Kriloff refused. Pougatcheff rode forward with his feeble band. The Cossacks, instead of meeting him as a foe, received him with cries of welcome, and enlisted themselves under his banner. Kriloff had no small difficulty in escaping, and returned to the Governor with the news of his disaster.

Pougatcheff approached the ramparts of the town, and summoned the Governor to yield in the name of Peter the Third. Upon a refusal, he commanded a general assault. Finding however that his small band was unable to cope with a powerful garrison, and that further attempt would be useless, he

changed the siege into a blockade. The Governor held out with perseverance, spite of want of provisions—which at last grew so great, as to reduce the garrison to eat their horses, boiled leather, and the most disgusting objects. The town remained in this painful state of blockade, until the news of an approaching corps of Russian troops forced Pougatcheff to retire from the spot.

From thence he directed his march to the town of Iletz, one hundred and forty-five versts from that he had abandoned. Here he met with better success. This town was defended by three hundred Cossacks, under the command of the Hettman Portnoff. Pougatcheff sent the latter word to advance and meet him, bidding him at the same time join his band. To the Cossacks of the garrison he promised a permission to wear their beards; to confer on them crosses, rivers and plains, money and ammunition, lead and powder, and perpetual freedom, if they obeyed his order. The Hettman, true to his duty, refused to listen to the command of Pougatcheff; but the Cossacks seized him, bound his hands, and admitted the invader into the town, amidst the ringing of bells and with bread and salt. The Hettman was immediately hung. Pougatcheff remained for three days in Iletz, and from thence directed his way to the fortress of Rasinnoyou. \*

Almost the same events occurred here as at the

town of Iletz : the Cossacks, its garrison, flew to join the impostor ; the fortress was taken ; its commandant, several officers, and a priest were hung ; and a Russian regiment of infantry united itself to the rebel troops.

Pougatcheff's band grew daily more and more numerous. A horde of Kirghese had enlisted itself under his banners. The Governor of Orenburg, Reinsdorp, now saw the necessity of preparing for the defence of the town committed to his charge. Every hour brought him fresh news of the success of Pougatcheff. The taking of the town of Iletz, that of the fortress of Rasinnoyou, those of Tatischeff and Ozernaya, which followed shortly after, were succeeded by the terrible information of the complete destruction of the detachment sent against Pougatcheff under the command of Colonel Biloff. All the officers had been hung, a portion of the detachment shot to death by order of the conqueror, and thirteen cannons had fallen into his hands.

From Tatischeff Pougatcheff hurried to the fortress of Tchirnorechinsky ; the garrison yielded at his order. He then advanced to the little town of Samarsk ; its gates were thrown open for his reception ; "A carpet," says an eye-witness, "was spread on the ground, on which stood a table with bread and salt." When Pougatcheff entered, the bells of all the churches rang a welcome, the people uncovered their heads, and, when the terrible

visitor had descended from his horse, the whole of the population flung themselves on their knees before him. Seating himself on a chair prepared for the occasion, he kissed the bread and salt, and then exclaimed, "Rise, my children!" The crowd rushed to kiss his hand. He then asked where were the Attaman, and the Cossacks of the garrison. He was told that the former had retired to Orenburg with the Cossacks, and that twenty alone had been left for the service of the post, and that even those had hid themselves. Pougatcheff, upon receiving this information, turned to the priest, and angrily ordered him to seek for the latter. "Thou art but a priest," said he, "but thou mayest yet be an Attaman: thou and all the inhabitants of Samarsk shall answer with your heads for their absence, if they are not discovered." He then went to the Attaman's father, at whose house dinner had been prepared for him. "If thy son were here," said he to the old man, "thy dinner would have been an honourable and a welcome one; but as it is, thy *klebb sol*\* is worthless. What kind of an Attaman is he who abandons his post of duty?" After dinner, half tipsy, he ordered his host to be flogged; but his officers interceded in the old man's favour. The latter consequently escaped this punishment; but he was

\* *Klebb sol*, bread and salt.

put in chains, and remained for a night under guard in a small hovel. The following day, the absent Cossacks were brought to Pougatcheff. He addressed them in a friendly manner, and joined them to his troops. They asked him what quantity of provisions they should take with them ; "Nothing more," he replied, "than a crust of bread ; you will accompany me to Orenburg."

News was suddenly brought him that a corps of Bashkirs, which had been sent from the Governor of Orenburg, surrounded the town. Pougatcheff set out to meet them, and took the whole party without a blow. They were added to his force.

About the same time a small detachment of his troop had attacked and taken the fortress of Pre-tchestensky. The officers of the garrison, by a rare favour, escaped hanging.

Pougatcheff's success had been as rapid as his movements. A fortnight had only elapsed since he appeared beneath the walls of Jaik, and in that space of time seven fortresses had been taken. He had then been accompanied by but a small band of followers, three hundred in number ; he had now three thousand regular troops, infantry and cavalry, and more than twenty cannons. An innumerable crowd, composed of different nations, Tartars, Bashkirs, Kalmucks, Russians, the greatest part without arms, followed him. Pougatcheff's daring increased with the augmentation of his forces. He now re-

solved to lay siege to the town of Orenburg. The decision was no sooner made than he crossed over the Jaik, and directed his way to the town in question.

#### IV.

Orenburg is situated on the banks of the Oural, in the midst of an immeasurable desert. In a flourishing state, remarkable for many fine buildings, for its extensive commerce with Asia, and for the strength of its fortifications, this town offered a tempting reward to Pougatcheff, who knew, could he but take it, that he would meet with both treasures and partisans in its walls. On the 5th of October we find Pougatcheff encamped at five miles' distance from the town.

Reinsdorp was at that time governor. The first thing he did was to order the suburbs to be set fire to ; his order was obeyed, and a church, with a solitary cottage, alone remained. The inhabitants were taken into the town.

Pougatcheff in the meantime was not idle : numerous hay-ricks, which had been prepared for the winter's use by the garrison, he ordered to be burnt. Reinsdorp had not had time, or had neglected, to bring them into the town. Well aware that there would remain no food for his cavalry, he endeavoured to defend them ; he sent therefore Major Nayoumoff, with 1500 soldiers, to prevent

their destruction. Pougatcheff met him with his artillery, and was not long in forcing him to return to the town.

Reinsdorp's second measure was not more successful. In the prison of Orenburg had been confined for some time a bold brigand, of the name of Khlopoucha. For twenty previous years he had pillaged, with his gang, the country around ; three times he had been sent to Siberia, and as often had managed to escape. Reinsdorp formed the idea of making use of this villain for the purpose of conveying to Pougatcheff a letter of exhortation, with sundry other duties useless to mention. The idea, it must be owned, was by no means a very sensible one. Khlopoucha swore to accomplish faithfully any orders he might receive ; he was accordingly freed, and sent to Pougatcheff. As may be expected, he returned no more to Reinsdorp. His acquaintance with the country around rendered him a useful instrument to Pougatcheff. The latter therefore conferred on him, *instanter*, the rank of Colonel, and made him a present of a suit of clothes, belonging to some officer who had lately been hung. He was not long in rendering his Chief good service. He hurried from village to village, inciting the inhabitants to rebellion, pillaging and plundering wherever he came. He took possession of several manufactories on the Oural, and sent his master from thence cannons, bullets, and powder ; and in a

short time he formed a fresh gang, formidable both by its number and its ravages.

Reinsdorp now assembled the principal inhabitants of the town in council, and demanded their opinion, whether it was better to sally forth against Pougatcheff, or to fortify the town until the arrival of fresh forces. Be it remarked, that the town of Orenburg possessed at that moment three thousand soldiers, well armed and disciplined, and seventy pieces of cannon. "With such a force," writes a Russian author, "the Governor *could* and *should* have annihilated the rebel army. In that council, one member only gave an opinion worthy of a soldier,—to go at all risks against the rebels. His name deserves to be recorded—it was Staroff Meliukoff; the rest considered it more prudent to fortify the town. Reinsdorp agreed with the latter.

On the 8th of October however certain favourable circumstances induced the Governor to send forth Nayoumoff a second time against Pougatcheff. The same result ensued, and Nayoumoff, with a considerable loss of men, sought refuge once more in the walls of the town.

Every day a fresh combat ensued. Pougatcheff declared that it was not his intention to take Orenburg by assault; "I will not waste my troops," said he, "but I will reduce the town by famine."

A want of hay now began to be felt. The consequence was, that the greatest part of the horses

were despatched to Ouffa; the whole fell into the hands of Pougatcheff.

Winter now drew on, and with it heavy falls of snow and severe frost. The change of weather induced Pougatcheff to burn his tents, and retire to a village called Bairdsky Sloboda, seven versts from Orenburg. He daily however returned to Orenburg, and continued to batter the walls of the town with his artillery.

His army daily increased, and amounted to twenty-five thousand men. Fresh bands of Tartars, Kalmucks, Bashkirs, Cossacks, Russian peasants, and vagabonds of every species, came flocking to his tent. Some were armed with knives, axes, lances, pistols, a few with swords and guns, but the greatest portion could boast of no other weapon than a wieldy club. The Cossacks alone received pay; the rest fought for glory's sake, and what they could plunder. Divine service was daily performed; the priests never failed in praying for the Emperor Petra Fedorovitch, and his spouse the Empress Catherine. Whenever Pougatcheff walked out into the streets of the Sloboda, he invariably flung heaps of copper coin to the populace. The houses were filled with the wives and daughters of the officers who had been killed or hung. Every kind of debauch took place. Pougatcheff's soldiers seemed delighted with the existence they were enjoying; several had even the

boldness to approach the walls of the fortress of Orenburg, and to invite the garrison to come and partake of their revels. "It is time," cried they aloud to the soldiers, "that you should think of serving your Emperor, Petra Fedorovitch! Come, brethren! we have good wine and pretty women in abundance." Sometimes a band of the garrison sallied forth against them, and a hot combat generally ensued. Pougatcheff on all these occasions took an active part in the fight; his courage excited the admiration of his followers, and he several times narrowly escaped being taken prisoner, in some imprudent display of fearless valour.

In the meantime Major-General Karr, who had been sent against Pougatcheff at the head of a considerable body of troops, drew near the frontiers of the province of Orenburg. Karr had persuaded himself into the conviction that nothing was easier than to overcome Pougatcheff and his gang. "My only fear is," wrote he to Count Tchernicheff, "that these brigands will take to flight at our approach, and scatter themselves over the country." Karr, full of hope, advanced towards Pougatcheff. The latter sent forward his active follower, Khlopoucha, to meet the General. Shortly after, Pougatcheff appeared in person among his soldiers. A combat ensued, which lasted eight hours; at length Karr, after the loss of a part of his soldiers and his ammunition, was obliged to retire. A company of grena-

diers, which had been sent from Simbirsk to join him, fell likewise into the hands of Pougatcheff.

Karr's defeat had now taught him that his boast had been a little premature. He, whose only fear had previously been that the rebel Pougatcheff would take to flight at his approach, now sent word to the War Department that, in order to conquer the latter, several regiments of cavalry, with a powerful artillery, were necessary. He wrote immediately to Colonel Tchernicheff, not to quit with his force the town of Perevolotsky, but to fortify the place in case of attack. His letter did not reach the Colonel.

The latter had heard of the defeat of Karr, and the capture of the grenadiers. He was lost in doubt as to what course to pursue,—whether to remain where he was, or to seek shelter in the town of Orenburg,—when five Cossacks, with the Deputy Paduroff, were brought before him. They stated that they had fled from the camp of Pougatcheff, and assured Tchernicheff of their will to serve him. The Deputy, as a proof, showed him his medal and his papers, advised him urgently to take refuge in Orenburg, and offered to be his guide. Tchernicheff accepted his proposal, and set forward. He had with him 1500 soldiers and Cossacks, 500 Kalmucks, and twenty cannons. Padouroff had laid him a snare, and, instead of conducting him by a secret road, led him straight to Pougatcheff. The latter fell upon him with a chosen force. Tcherni-

cheff's artillery was soon got possession of. The Cossacks and Kalmucks betrayed him; in fine, the whole of his troops fell into the hands of the conqueror. Tchernicheff, and thirty-eight officers, were immediately hung.

From that moment Karr's conduct was that of a coward. He pretended to be taken ill, abandoned his post, and fled to Moscow. The Empress Catherine expelled him from the service.

"Nothing now," writes an author, "seemed capable of opposing the ambition of Pougatcheff. His dominion extended from the foot of the Oural mountains to the banks of the river Volga: it embraced an extent of upwards of four thousand miles." His success had almost persuaded him into the belief that he was in reality the Sovereign whose name he had usurped; he assumed the imperial ornaments, created ministers, instituted orders, and distributed among his troops ranks and dignities. Intoxicated with his good fortune, he lost all that command he had hitherto exercised over himself, and gave way to the most brutal excesses of passion. He fell in love with a Cossack girl, by name Oustinea Kouznetsoff, and resolved to marry her. Her parents represented to him the impropriety of the match. "Gossoudar!" said they, "our daughter is not a queen or a princess, how therefore can she be your wife? and how can you marry her while her Majesty the Empress is still

alive?" But Pougatcheff did marry her, and with all the pomp and ceremony of royal nuptials. He had her declared Empress, and appointed for her ladies of state and maids of honour. In the church-service he ordered the priest to pray for the Empress Oustinea Petrovna, after the Emperor Petra Foedorovitch.

In the meantime his former wife, Sophia Nedioujenoe, had, by order of the Russian authorities, been removed with her five children from the banks of the Don to the Tiouremnoe Zamok in Kazan, where Pougatcheff found her on his arrival in that town. The house in which he had lived was ordered to be consumed by the common hangman, and the ashes to be scattered to the winds. The spot on which it stood was surrounded by a wooden railing, and was to be left for ever unoccupied, as an accursed spot.

The Russian authorities had at length become aware of the extent of their danger. Accordingly General Bibikoff, a distinguished officer, and one of the most eminent personages of the Court of Catherine, was sent against Pougatcheff at the head of an army, consisting of from 30,000 to 40,000 men. At the same time a manifesto was circulated through the Empire, in which the real name of the impostor was made known, and which exhorted the Cossacks of the Don and the Jaik to return under the protection of their legitimate Sovereign.

But what seemed much more likely to put a

speedy term to the life of Pougatcheff was the promise of a reward of 100,000 roubles to him who would yield him up dead or alive to the authorities.

Pougatcheff on his part replied to these manifestos by others in the name of Peter the Third, Emperor of all the Russias. In one of these, he declared that slavery was henceforth abolished, and that the peasants were free,—a measure which seemed likely to increase his sway, already so vast and so terrible. He struck medals and coins with his effigy and the name he had assumed. In fine, he showed little or no concern for the danger which menaced his safety; and when he was told of the army that was sent against him, his only reply was, “Let them come! they will of their own accord fall into our hands.”

Another fortress, that of Ilinskoe, had fallen into his hands. It had been strongly defended by Major Zaeff and his troops, and cost Pougatcheff some trouble to take it. The major, almost all the officers, and a great number of men, fell in its defence. When it was taken, the soldiers, disarmed, were placed before the cannon’s mouth, on their knees. Pougatcheff, addressing himself to the latter, exclaimed, “Your Emperor, against whom you have fought, forgives you; may God forgive likewise! Rise!” The inhabitants then came in turns, and kissed his hands in token of their allegiance.

The situation of the inhabitants of Orenburg grew

daily more and more horrible. Flour and meat had long been exhausted ; even horse-flesh, which had for some time been the common food, began to grow a scarcity. Disease now broke out. The inhabitants and garrison were loud in their murmurs, and a revolt in the town was hourly expected.

Reinsdorp had at three separate periods ordered a fresh sally to be made on the besiegers, but always with renewed losses. At last, finding that he could not cope with Pougatcheff in arms, he vented his rage in words. He wrote to the latter an angry letter, in which he heaped upon the rebel every angry epithet of abuse his mind could devise. But a very good idea of its contents may be formed from the address, which ran thus :—“To the accursed villain, the abandoned of God, and the son-in-law of Satan, Yemelian Pougatcheff.” The latter, who had so often beaten his antagonist with the sword, resolved not be outdone by the pen ; he therefore summoned his secretary, Padouroff, and having ordered him to repay in kind the compliments he had received, the following missive was sent to his Excellency the Governor.

“ *To the Governor of Orenburg, the Son-in-law of Satan, and the Devil’s own offspring.* ”

“ Thy foul invective, thou vile disturber of the general peace, has been received here, and we thank thee for the favour. But be it known to thee, that whatever be the artifices and snares which, by the instigation of Satan,

thou employest, still thou canst not surpass the wisdom of the Almighty. Yield thyself, villain ! It should be by this time evident to thee, beast ! that thy vile good fortune is alone owing to thy father, Satan. Recollect, beast as thou art, that though by the Devil's instigation thou hast in many places set traps to catch us, thy trouble has been abortive, and we laugh at you ; and although there should not remain here a rope to hang thee, still we will buy of some Mordva a penny-worth of hemp, and with it will spin a cord for thy villainous neck. Do not doubt the truth of this, thou son of a w—e ! Our merciful Monarch, like a heavenly eagle, flies every day over the whole army, and is ever with us, the foremost in danger. We therefore advise thee strenuously to cease to be a traitor, and to come to our forgiving father and all-merciful Monarch ; seek him in humility, and be sure, spite of thy manifold transgressions and thy boundless treachery, he will pardon thee, ay, and, to boot, will not deprive thee of thy former rank ; and it is well known here, that thou art forced to eat dead men's flesh. Thus of our mercy we inform thee, and of our readiness to serve thee, if thou return to thy duty.

"February 25th, 1774."

But Pougatcheff's star was now upon the wane. After a sanguinary battle with Major-General Gal-litsin, who had been detached by Bibikoff against the rebel army, Pougatcheff, who had displayed a valour and a heroism worthy of a better cause, saw the whole of his forces routed and dispersed. Forced at last to take to flight, he directed his way

with a feeble remnant of his troop to the Oural mountains, where he remained for some time concealed. Khlopoucha, his famous adherent, was taken prisoner and was executed in Orenburg.

The inhabitants of this town, who for six long months had suffered so terribly, the moment the news of their liberation arrived, wildly demonstrated their joy at this unexpected good fortune. Gallitsin was received as the saviour of Orenburg. In the Bairdsky village bread and provisions were found in abundance ; these were distributed among the half-famished sufferers, to whom food had been a luxury so long unknown.

## V.

Strange and rapid in their changes were the vicissitudes in the career of Pougatcheff. Today a common Cossack soldier ; the next, a prisoner chained and fettered ; the third, proclaimed Emperor by a numerous army ; and a little time after precipitated again into his former misery, wandering in woods and valleys to conceal himself from detection,—such were the events which a few brief months had gathered together. But now his condition seemed a hopeless one ; his career seemed totally ended, and the rebellion which had threatened to overturn the Russian throne was supposed by all to be totally suppressed.

Judge therefore the astonishment of the Russian

authorities when they learnt that Pougatcheff, the vanquished rebel, in more than a month after his defeat, had once more made his appearance on the field of battle, at the head of an army as numerous as that which had just been destroyed.

Terrible and savage in the midst of his former success, the reverses which he had suffered had now rendered him doubly so. Devastation and massacre seemed now his principal object. After having taken possession of several small towns and fortresses, desirous of inspiring his army with fresh confidence by some brilliant exploit, Pougatcheff directed his march to the town of Kazan. What he effected there the reader already knows. Pougatcheff retreated from Kazan, actively pursued by Michaelson and his troops. Several battles ensued ; both parties fought with an admirable pertinacity. Pougatcheff, suffering from a wound which he had previously received, was still to be seen in the midst of danger. His courage however was not sufficient to ensure him success : a second time his troops were routed ; thousands of prisoners fell into the hands of Michaelson ; and Pougatcheff himself, when he re-passed the Volga after this defeat, was attended but by three hundred Cossacks of the Jaik, his chosen followers.

“Pougatcheff,” writes the author we have before quoted, “Pougatcheff fled, but his very flight seemed a triumph. Never in the midst of his success had

he been more dreaded ; never had rebellion shown itself with greater force than in that moment of seeming ruin. The revolt spread from village to village, from province to province. The appearance of one or two of Pougatcheff's followers was sufficient to raise an entire district. In a word, Pougatcheff," says Lesur, " like Antæus, had only to strike the earth with his foot to raise fresh legions."

Hordes of Bashkirs and Kalmucks, troops of Cossacks, and bands of rebellious peasants armed with scythes and axes, spite of his reverses, came flocking towards him as towards their liberator. His forces daily increased, and he soon saw himself once more at the head of a formidable army ; his reverses likewise had taught him prudence, and had inspired him with vast projects. According to Lesur, his intention was now to penetrate to Moscow, where his emissaries were busy exciting rebellion in the hearts of the populace. He proposed to avoid the fortified towns, to descend the Volga, to follow the line of the Caucasus, to collect on his road fresh legions,—hordes of discontented Tartars, the Cossacks of the Don attached to his cause, those of the Ukraine, and in particular the Cossacks of the Zaporoiski, deprived of their ancient territory ; to proclaim the liberty of the peasantry, the extermination of the nobility, the abolition of the fundamental laws of the Empire ; to avoid all fixed battles,

to carry devastation, terror, and ruin wherever he went, and to overturn the throne if he could not himself mount it.

Such were his vast projects,—projects which, had they been formed at an earlier period, might have been crowned with success; but the cessation of the war which had hitherto been carried on against the Turks, obliged Pougatcheff to deviate from this plan. He feared lest a portion of that army should be directed against him, and he thought it prudent to remain for awhile in the deserts, which in case of a failure might offer him an asylum, where he proposed to discipline his troops, until their number could enable him to oppose or seduce the armies of the Empire.

The news of the destruction of Kazan, and of the general feeling of rebellion, had in the meantime reached the Court of St. Petersburg. Bibikoff had died previous to the former event, and the army he had commanded had remained without a chief. Count Panim, who had acquired fame and glory at the siege of Bender, was commissioned to take the command, and to oppose a simple Cossack soldier, who four years before had served in the ranks of the very army he had led on to victory.

Pougatcheff's first movements were crowned with success. He took the town of Alatir, then that of Saransk, almost without a blow. He then advanced to the town of Penza, which he took by assault. The

people flung themselves on their knees before him, and were pardoned ; the nobility had had time to escape. The Voyevode, or Governor, was killed, with twenty brave companions, during the assault. All the Government buildings and the houses of the nobility were consumed. Pougatcheff moved forward towards the town of Saratoff.

Here the same scene, with increased horrors, marked his arrival. Pougatcheff hung all the nobles of the town, and forbade that their bodies should be interred. The Governor had the good fortune to escape, with fifty men of the garrison ; a common Cossack was appointed by the invader in his place. Saratoff remained a wilderness.

Pougatcheff then directed his way to the town of Demetriefsk. Here he encountered Major Ditz, with nearly three thousand soldiers under his command. A battle ensued ; Ditz was killed, and his whole troop exterminated by the victor.

Not far from this spot Pougatcheff met with the astronomer Lovitz, member of the Academy of Sciences, and asked him who he was. Being informed that he was occupied in observing the heavenly bodies, Pougatcheff had him hung, "in order," as he said, "that he might be nearer the stars."

A new and illustrious warrior Pougatcheff had now the honour of counting among his opponents : this was no less a personage than the celebrated

Suvaroff. During the life of Bibikoff, he had been ordered by the War Department to march against the rebels, but upon reflection the order had been countermanded, for fear of giving Europe too high an opinion of the importance of Pougatcheff and his rebel army. The necessity seemed now of a nature sufficiently urgent to authorize such a proceeding ; accordingly Suvaroff set out from Moscow to join Count Panim and his troops.

Ere he arrived, Pougatcheff had suffered a defeat which was destined to be the last action in which he was to engage. Attacked on one side by Count Panim, and on the other by Colonel Michaelson, he had been forced to retreat. Surprised at last in a difficult position between two chains of mountains on the Volga, in narrow defiles which scarcely allowed his troops the means of turning, encumbered with a multitude of waggons loaded with heavy baggage and a troop of women, his enemies had fallen upon him in that difficult position. Never had Pougatcheff showed such a daring valour as on that desperate occasion ; never had his troops fought more bravely in his defence. At length however, overwhelmed by the superiority of the army of Michaelson, his soldiers were forced to give way. Thousands were cut to pieces, others precipitated with their horses and chariots from the rocks to which they had rushed for refuge. Pougatcheff himself, with a few faithful followers, escaped by

swimming across the river Volga. From thence he betook himself to the deserts situated between that stream and the river Jaik,—the very spot where fifteen months before he had set out upon his first expedition, and which was now the scene of his ruin.

Here he was actively pursued by Suvaroff. In the meantime his enemies had surrounded him in every direction with their forces; no possible means of escape offered itself. Neither food nor water could be procured in the barren steppe in which he was enclosed. The greatest part of the faithful followers who were with him died of hunger; the same fate hourly threatened the remainder. In this horrible position, the fidelity and attachment which had hitherto resisted every seduction of the Russian Government, gave way, and they resolved to ensure their own safety by betraying the chief they had so long upheld.

## VI.

The closing events of Pougatcheff's life have been well described, in the sketch of this revolt, by the poet Poushkin, and to him my readers must be indebted for the recital.

Pougatcheff was sitting alone, plunged in deep thought; his weapons were hanging beside him. Suddenly, several Cossacks approached him, among the rest, three who had been hitherto the most at-

tached to his cause, and who had more than once risked their life in his defence, Tvorogoff, Tschumakeff, and Tiduleff. Pougatcheff asked them what they wanted. One of them represented to their fallen chief that, surrounded as he was on every side by his enemies, with no remaining hope of safety, he had no other resource left than that of yielding himself to the discretion of the Russians, and of imploring his pardon. As his only reply to this timid counsel, Pougatcheff drew his dagger, and rushed towards the speaker, with the intention of plunging it into his heart ; but the latter took refuge behind his comrades. "What means this ?" exclaimed Pougatcheff to the Cossacks ; "do you intend to betray your Emperor ?" "There is no other course left us," replied they ; "we have long followed you, it is now your turn to follow us." They flung themselves upon him : Pougatcheff resisted violently, and succeeded in forcing his opponents to retire several paces. However they once more rushed upon him. Overwhelmed by the number of his opponents, and unarmed, he was soon overcome. The Cossacks then tied his hands, and, having set him on horseback, led him towards the town of Jaik. During the whole of the way, Pougatcheff never ceased to threaten them with the vengeance of the Grand Duke, his son. Once he found means to free his hands, and, seizing a pistol, fired it upon one of his conductors. At the

same moment he ordered the rest to bind the traitors; but his orders were no longer regarded. He was led to the town above mentioned, and delivered into the hands of the Commandant.

Suvaroff had in the meantime learnt from certain hermits of the capture of Pougatcheff; he consequently hurried to the town of Yaik. On his way he encountered a band of Kirghese, with whom he had a fierce combat. In a few days he arrived at Jaik. Pougatcheff was delivered into his custody, and Suvaroff set out with his prisoner for the town of Simbirsk, where he was to meet Count Panim.

Pougatcheff was placed in an iron cage, and in fetters. A strong guard, armed with two cannons, surrounded him on every side. Suvaroff, the famous Suvaroff, did not quit him a moment. During the journey, a fire took place in the very hut in which Pougatcheff and his guards spent the night: he was consequently removed for a time from this cage, and bound with cords to a telega. Suvaroff stood by him as sentinel during the whole night—a proof of the terrible consideration he had acquired.

The escort arrived at the town of Simbirsk, and Pougatcheff was immediately led before Count Panin, who met him with his staff at the threshold of his mansion. He asked the prisoner how he dared to assume the name of the deceased Emperor. The captive answered his questions with

an audacious indifference. Count Panim, seeing that his boldness had an effect upon the populace assembled around the palace, struck the prisoner violently in the face, and seizing him by the beard, dragged a portion of the hair from his chin. Blood flowed from the double wound. Pougatcheff was led to his dungeon handcuffed and fettered, to the wall of which he was attached by a heavy chain. Here the Academician Ritchkoff, father of the Commandant of Simbirsk, who had been killed by the rebels, visited the prisoner. Ritchkoff asked him how he could have been guilty of such unexampled atrocity. Pougatcheff replied with a tone of voice expressive of deep remorse, "I know I have offended both God and my sovereign; but I will try and expiate my injuries to both." When Ritchkoff spoke of his father, he wept bitterly. Pougatcheff seeing him thus affected, himself melted into tears.

After some time, Pougatcheff was conducted to Moscow, still in chains and shut up in his iron cage. He was fed from the hands of the soldiers. The latter were heard to exclaim to the crowds who gathered round the iron cage to see the prisoner, "Recollect, my friends, that you have seen Pougatcheff." His bold and audacious replies to those who met him on the road, are still in the recollection of many aged persons. During the whole of the journey his firmness never once quitted him;

he might even be said to have been gay. On his arrival in Moscow, he was encountered by a vast crowd of people, who had a few months before expected to see him arrive at the head of a vast army. He was confined in Monicni Dvor (the Mint), where, for the space of two months, from morn to night, the curious could behold him chained to the wall, and frightful even in his captivity. It is said that several women fainted away when they encountered his dark fiery eye, and heard his voice. Pougatcheff was condemned, by the court which had judged him, to be quartered alive; his head, hands, and feet were to be exposed upon the scaffold; the trunk was to be burnt and scattered in the wind. Perfilieff was to suffer the same punishment. Tchika was to be decapitated; Shigaieff, Padouroff, and Tornoff were to be hung; and eighteen of his principal adherents were to receive the knout and to be banished to Siberia. The sentence of Pougatcheff and his followers was to take place on the 10th of January, 1775.

On the morning appointed for the execution of this terrible ceremony, an immense crowd of persons assembled on a vast plain called the Bolott, where a lofty scaffold had been constructed. On this was seated the executioner, engaged, as Poushkin observed, in drinking spirits, and anxiously awaiting his victims. Around the scaffold were erected three gibbets. A regiment of soldiers

surrounded the place of punishment ; the officers were in furs, for the frost was terrible on that day. The roofs of the houses and the shops were covered with people, the plain and the neighbouring streets covered with carriages. Suddenly the cry arose, "He is coming ! he is coming !" Every eye was turned towards the spot. A sledge, preceded by a troop of cuirassiers, advanced forwards ; therein sat Pougatcheff, his head bare, and with a priest beside him. The prisoner bowed to the people, right and left. A troop of horse followed the equipage, with the rest of the condemned in the rear.

A Russian poet, and an eye-witness, Demetrieff, has described the execution of the sentence.

"The sledge," says he, "stopped beside the scaffold. Pougatcheff and his favourite, Perflieff, mounted the platform, followed by the priest and two officers. One of the officers then read the manifesto ; every word reached my ear.

"During the reading of that part of the manifesto in which the name, origin, and birthplace of the prisoner was made mention of, the Police-Master asked the former with a loud voice, 'Art thou that Cossack of the Don, Yemelka Pougatcheff?' The prisoner, with an equally loud tone of voice, answered, 'Such am I, Sir ! Yemelka Pougatcheff, a Cossack of the Don,—of the *stanitza* (village) of Zemoveisk.' While the remainder of the manifesto

was being read, he constantly turned his gaze to the cathedral before him, and made the sign of the cross, whilst Perfilieff stood motionless, his eyes bent upon the earth. After the conclusion of the manifesto, the priest gave both his blessing, and descended the ladder. At that moment Pougatcheff, after a few ordinary gestures of devotion, in a hurried manner took his farewell of the crowd. He bowed once more in every direction, and then exclaimed, with a broken voice, ‘Farewell, *Narod-pravoslavney!* (*i. e.* people of the true faith.) Forgive me for the injury I have done you! Farewell!’ After this a sign was given; the executioner, advancing forward to undress him, tore from off him his white sheep-skin *touloup*, and then, with equal violence, the red silk kaftan, his under-garment; then, throwing the prisoner backwards, with one blow his head was separated from his body.”

Thus died Pougatcheff. His sentence was changed by a secret order of the Empress into decapitation. His limbs were then divided from the trunk, and hung upon the four corners of the scaffold. Perfilieff received the same death as his chief. The punishment of the rest of the prisoners followed in succession. After the lapse of a few days the remains of Pougatcheff were consumed, and, according to the sentence, scattered in the wind by the hangman.

By an especial ukase of the Empress Catherine,

it was ordained that the town of Jaik, where the revolt had first broken out, should be henceforth named Ouralskaya, and that the river on whose banks the Cossacks had first exhibited their ferocity, should be termed the Ouralsk.

THE END.





